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**From Connemara to Minnesota:  
The Nugent Emigration Scheme, 1880**

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A Thesis Submitted for the Award of the Degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy

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## Contents

<b>Introduction .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Chapter 1: Post-Famine Connemara to the Agricultural Crisis of 1879.....</b>	<b>13</b>
Nineteenth Century Emigration Schemes .....	14
The Return of Famine to the West of Ireland.....	28
Society in the far west of Connacht .....	39
<b>Chapter 2: The Irish in America.....</b>	<b>54</b>
Eighteenth Century Irish Immigration .....	56
Nineteenth Century Catholic Irish Immigration.....	59
Catholic Irish Migrants Beyond North-Eastern Cities .....	74
Immigrant Comparisons: Irish-Americans and Irish-Australians .....	79
The Irish Head West to Minnesota.....	87
<b>Chapter 3: From Connemara to Graceville.....</b>	<b>94</b>
The Protagonists .....	95
Why Nugent chose the families he did from Connemara and South Mayo .....	99
The Emigrants' Primary Protagonist - James Nugent .....	106
Assisting the Poorest of Connemara and south Mayo to Emigrate .....	111
The Temperance Movement .....	113
John Ireland's Colonies in Minnesota.....	118
<b>Chapter 4: Nugent's Immigrants in Graceville .....</b>	<b>129</b>
Discontentment on the Prairies .....	132
The Nugent Immigrant Legacy .....	150
Irish Language.....	169
Anti-Catholic Bias.....	174
Misunderstandings of Assisted Immigration to Minnesota in the 1880s .....	180
<b>Chapter 5: The Tuke Assisted Emigration Schemes of the 1880s .....</b>	<b>192</b>
The Tuke Fund.....	202
The Decline of the Tuke Assisted Immigration Schemes.....	212
<b>Chapter 6: .....</b>	<b>223</b>
<b>Part 1: Nugent's immigrants after 1880.....</b>	<b>223</b>
<b>Part 2: Family Histories.....</b>	<b>232</b>
Nugent's Immigrants – Family Genealogies Beyond 1885 .....	237
<b>Conclusion.....</b>	<b>291</b>
<b>Images.....</b>	<b>296</b>
<b>Appendix .....</b>	<b>305</b>
<b>Bibliography .....</b>	<b>321</b>

## **Introduction**

In June 1880 a group of emigrants from Connemara, Co. Galway, and from south Mayo were assisted by Father James Nugent of Liverpool to leave the port of Galway for a new life in America. The emigrants were forced by famine and poverty to leave their homes and avail of a philanthropic colonisation scheme which funded their transportation and resettlement in rural Minnesota. The immigrants disembarked at Boston and travelled by train to Graceville having stopped along the way in Chicago and St Paul. Graceville had been founded just two years previously in 1878 by coadjutor Bishop of St Paul, John Ireland, who was determined to create towns and settlements for impoverished Catholic immigrants whom he considered to be at risk in the slums of the east coast of America. Assisting immigrants to leave Ireland had been attempted throughout the nineteenth century and in particular when unemployment and subsistence crises arose. The Famine of the 1840s resulted in hundreds of thousands of Irish immigrants arriving destitute to the east coast of Canada and the United States. In the cities along the east coast the immigrants lived in poverty having escaped certain death in Ireland. In 1880 when James Nugent and John Ireland assisted impoverished immigrants to leave the far west of Ireland it was to the new and available lands of Minnesota and not to east coast cities. The future for prairie Catholic enclaves in Minnesota along with reducing the numbers of families dependent on unproductive land in Connemara and south Mayo was promising.

## **Bishop John Ireland and the Mid-West population explosion**

The latter part of the nineteenth century was a period of rapid change and population expansion in the United States. As regions opened up in the west many immigrants sought new opportunities encouraged by affordable land. By 1870, twelve years after Minnesota joined the union and five years after the civil war, huge tracts of land from St Paul north to Fargo in the Dakota Territories and east to Sioux City in Iowa remained for the most part unsettled and uncultivated. Before settlers could farm the land, assurances were needed that they could transport their grain to market. As railway lines had already crossed the Mississippi it was only a matter of time before there was access for all. A further deterrent to settlers was the fear of Native American tribes but the likelihood of conflict had been reduced by Congress as the Sioux and Winnebago tribes had been forced from Minnesota to the Black

Hills in South Dakota leaving only the Chippewa in Minnesota.<sup>1</sup> The Sioux uprising of 1862 saw more people killed from indigenous conflict with immigrants than at any other time in American history, so the fear that encroachment of lands to the west could result in further slaughter was very real.

When the railroads did arrive in Minnesota they connected to the established trade centres. The Lake Superior and Mississippi Railroad began carrying wheat in 1870, the following year the St Paul and Pacific (later to be part of the Great Northern) reached the Red River Valley while the Northern Pacific linked Moorhead on the Red River to Duluth on Lake Superior. In 1872 the Winona and St Peter Railroad reached Dakota Territory and gave the grain belt access to the Mississippi and the river markets. The railroads assisted in the translocation of thousands from the east and from 1870 to 1880 Minnesota's population grew by 78 per cent. The traditional story of trapper-rancher-farmer - brave pioneers carving an existence from wood and rock - did not apply after the railroad revolution. According to James Hedges the expansion into the west was not 'altogether the story of fearless men pushing at random into uncharted country, nor of bands of settlers travelling in covered-wagon trains, desperately withstanding one dire calamity after another', but it was rather the story of farmers from the older states, 'crowded into uncomfortable trains, moving, undisturbed by spectacular adventure into the fertile middle-western farm lands, already surveyed and partially settled'. Directing and encouraging this sort of settlement were the western railroads, 'forced, as they were, to adopt definite colonization programs in order to make their existence on a profitable basis possible, they became the most important single factor in the development of the Trans-Mississippi West'.<sup>2</sup>

To prevent speculators from acquiring land the railway companies employed agents to distribute lands to settlers willing to relocate to the prairies. In 1876, John Ireland signed a contract with the St Paul and Pacific Railroad making him exclusive agent for all railroad lands in Swift County. This was the first of eleven contracts which were to be signed by the Bishop and five different railroads over the next five years.<sup>3</sup> To accommodate Nugent's immigrants John Ireland reserved fifty farms of 160 acres each in Graceville, Minnesota.

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<sup>1</sup>*Minnesota: Its Resources and Progress, its Beauty, Healthfulness and Fertility; and its Attractions and Advantages as a Home for Immigrants. Compiled by the Commissioner of Statistics and published by direction of State Board of Immigration.* (Minneapolis, 1872), p.8

<sup>2</sup> James Shannon, *Catholic Colonization on the Western Frontier* (New Haven, 1957), pp 2-8

<sup>3</sup> Shannon, James, *Catholic Colonization on the Western Frontier*, p.55; Moynihan, J.H., *The Life Of Archbishop John Ireland*, pp 27-8; Moynihan, J.H., *The Life Of Archbishop John Ireland*, p.28, 'Archbishop Ireland's Colonies', in *Acta Et Dicta*, October 1934, p.226, *Catholic Colonization in Minnesota. Colony of Avoca, Murray County, South-Western Minnesota*. Published by the Catholic Colonization Bureau, St. Paul, Minnesota. (Dublin, 1880), p.10

Ireland further instructed his land agent Major Thompson to construct a small frame house on each farm and to break, i.e., plough, five acres.<sup>4</sup> It was hoped the success of Nugent's immigrants would put in place a chain migration as had occurred throughout the nineteenth century when assisted immigration of families and communities had been considered. An increase in emigration would provide a solution to the overpopulation in the far west of Ireland and further satisfy the need to populate the American prairies while at the same time increase Catholic representation in the United States.

### **James Nugent and Catholic Assisted Immigration/Colonisation**

Father James Nugent had been ordained a Catholic priest during the Irish famine years; his father, John Nugent, had originated from County Meath and had immigrated to Liverpool in the early 1820s. In the 1840s the young Fr Nugent cared for starving Irish immigrants who had arrived in Liverpool in their thousands in an attempt to escape destitution in Ireland. In the decades that followed Nugent remained a dedicated advocate of the poorest, in particular orphan children. In 1868, 100,000 orphan children were homeless on the streets of Liverpool.<sup>5</sup> One of Nugent's early attempts at assisted emigration occurred in 1870 when he transported 24 children to Canada. These children were the forerunners of many thousands of children who immigrated with Nugent's assistance to North America over the next sixty years.<sup>6</sup> Nugent first visited Minnesota in 1870 and, according to Bennett, St Paul was to become his second home as two of his sisters had settled there and two of his nieces had become religious sisters, i.e., nuns, at St. Joseph's Academy.<sup>7</sup> The order was known as the Sisters of St Joseph of Carondelet.

In 1880 Nugent visited Connemara and south Mayo after reading accounts of starvation and famine in the most remote regions of the far west. Nugent and other influential civic and business leaders of Liverpool raised funds to enable a number of families to leave Ireland for new lives in America. Assisted emigration was not a new concept to the Irish: it had first been applied in the early nineteenth century by landlords and subsequently used by Poor Law unions which were grant-aided by the government to alleviate the suffering of the poor and the cost of sustaining them. According to Moran between 250,000 and 300,000 people

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<sup>4</sup> Shannon, J.P., *Catholic Colonization on the Western Frontier*, p.156-7, *The Saint Paul Pioneer Press*, January 28, 1876

<sup>5</sup> John Furnival, *Children of the Second Spring* ( Herefordshire, 2005), p.117

<sup>6</sup> Bennett, Canon, *Father Nugent of Liverpool* (Liverpool, 1949), p.95

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., p.102

received full or partial assistance to immigrate to North America in the nineteenth century.<sup>8</sup> Philanthropic efforts to assist families to relocate were considered in the years after the famine in order to reduce the numbers of young people dependent upon workhouses for survival. Those who supported assisted immigration and assisted colonization from the far west of Ireland in the 1880s to the United States depended upon the good will and support of organisations on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean.

Throughout the 1870s and 80s great numbers of settlers relocated to Minnesota; however large scale emigration/colonization was first considered in the preceding decades. The earliest experiment of large-scale colonization on railroad lands in the Mid-West began with the Illinois Central in the 1850s. In 1872 the Northern Pacific railway established the Northern Pacific Emigration Bureau with a main office in London with branches in Bristol, Exeter, Hereford and Liverpool. Agents were also hired to staff offices in Scotland, Germany, France, Holland, Norway and Sweden. The following year an emigrant aid office was set up in New York City.<sup>9</sup>

Colonel Hans Mattson was appointed the first director of immigration for the state of Minnesota in 1867. Less than a decade later, John Ireland became coadjutor Bishop of St Paul in 1875 and in 1879, railway magnate, James J. Hill, took on the project of running a railway from St Paul to Puget Sound. It was these three combined energies - state, church and commercial interests - that came together and began a vigorous campaign to settle the upper Mid-West and North-West.

### **Studying Nugent's Immigrants**

As previously stated Nugent's immigrants arrived in Boston in June 1880 and then travelled to Graceville in western Minnesota to settle upon farms which had been provided for them. What happened to the families, and the conditions in which they lived on the prairie, attracted considerable attention at the time, and has been discussed by several scholars since. The events that transpired during the brief period that the immigrants lived in Graceville became a sensation in late 1880 and early 1881 with the spotlight held firmly on assisted immigration/colonization programmes. In the early months of 1881 with spring approaching the Colonization Bureau assisted the majority of the immigrants to leave Graceville. It is difficult to state with accuracy what became of these families; it is possible

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<sup>8</sup> Moran, Gerard, *Sending out Ireland's Poor* (Dublin, 2004), p.14

<sup>9</sup> Ibid. pp 9-11

some became railroad employees and moved away from Minnesota while others remained in St Paul and surrounding cities.

Nugent's immigrants have received greater attention than other immigrant groups in Minnesota for a number of reasons. The events which occurred during the immigrants' brief stay in Graceville were documented widely. Nugent's immigrants were recalled in the context of interest in the immigration experience of the impoverished Catholic Irish but also due to their connection with a prominent Catholic prelate. Indeed, the many achievements of Archbishop Ireland are often contrasted with his less successful endeavours and within this context Nugent's immigrants have been discussed as an example of failure. Nugent's immigrants are noted as examples of those less fortunate in building a new life on the prairie. The quintessential tale of American success is juxtaposed with that of the miserable immigrant who fails to make good.

By the end of 1881 the story of Nugent's immigrants had faded in the memories of most and for the most part, the account of the immigrants was recalled only when researchers began reviewing the work of John Ireland. In 1933 Dillon O'Brien's son Thomas wrote an article regarding his father and the dealings he had with Nugent's immigrants. The following year, Monsignor Moynihan assisted in cementing the view that Nugent's immigrants failed as farmers on the prairie. Ecclesiastical writers from Moynihan in the 1930s to Shannon and Reardon in the 1950s provided detailed accounts of Catholic achievements in the Mid-West. The authors were educated by the Catholic Church and respectfully held Archbishop John Ireland in esteem. However, in these same accounts, Nugent's immigrants were represented as 'shiftless mendicants'.<sup>10</sup> This opinion largely holds to account the immigrants as being unfit for life on the prairie; it also consolidated the opinion that the immigrants themselves were to blame for the hardships they suffered. The authors did not examine who the immigrants were and failed to properly consider the reasons why they did not succeed on the land; their research was focused on Catholic colonization in Minnesota and the many communities who viewed John Ireland as the founder of these same settlements. Nugent's immigrants were considered merely as an example of one group who failed among the many thousands assisted to settle in the Mid-West territories.

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<sup>10</sup> O'Brien, Thomas D., 'Dillon O'Brien' in *Acta Et Dicta*, October 1933, p.50; Moynihan, Humphrey, 'Archbishop Ireland's Colonies', in *Acta Et Dicta*, October 1934, p.222; James Shannon, *Catholic Colonization on the Western Frontier*, p. 157, (1953), 'Bishop Ireland's Connemara Experiment', in *Minnesota History* 35:5, p. 207, (1957); J. M. Reardon, *The Catholic Church in the Diocese of St. Paul*, p. 242, (1952); J. H. Moynihan, *The Life of Archbishop Ireland*, p. 26, (1952); Shannon, 'Bishop Ireland's Connemara Experiment', in *Minnesota History* 35:5, p. 213, (1957)



In the 1980s, a comprehensive history of the ethnic groups who made Minnesota their home was published, to which Ann Regan contributed on Irish immigrants. Regan's account highlighted less successful colonisation attempts such as Nugent's group and identified the immigrants as Irish speaking 'subsistence fishermen and garden farmers [who] had no experience with large scale wheat cultivation, no desire to invest labour one year for a return the next, and little energy to work for themselves'. According to Regan, the account of Nugent's immigrants 'had a far greater impact than the incident would seem to warrant'.<sup>11</sup> A decade later, journalist Seosamh Ó Cuaig of Connemara examined Nugent's immigrants and produced a documentary which was directed by Bob Quinn. The title of the documentary was 'Graceville' and it was first aired on the national Irish language television channel TG4 in 1996. The following year the documentary was screened at the Galway Film Fleadh with the description of how the 'Connemara immigrants were made scapegoats in a row between a Catholic Bishop and the Freemasons'.<sup>12</sup> The documentary which laid bare the conditions the immigrants faced living on the Minnesota prairie, was filmed in winter with conditions compared to the winter of 1880. Interviews were filmed of Irish Americans while their accounts and memories were unverified. Atmospheric music was added and the fact that few documents belonging to John Ireland existed implied something was amiss. The ultimate conclusion was that John Ireland and the Colonisation Bureau bore the responsibility for the neglect of the immigrants. The shift of responsibility for the failure moved from the immigrants to the Catholic Colonization Bureau.

It was in the 1990s that historians advocated the adoption of transnational histories. According to one historian, there was a concerted effort to 'internationalise' American history, 'by placing the experience of the U.S. in a global context, and, in doing so, undermining notions of exceptionalism'. What has subsequently emerged is a methodology that stresses 'connections and interactions', and no longer views bodies of water as the boundaries dividing nations but instead linking people.<sup>13</sup> The principal challenge of writing transnational history is that it requires knowledge of more than one national history along with an engagement with broader conceptual issues.<sup>14</sup>

It was also in the 1990s that Gerard Moran reviewed James Nugent's scheme once more. Moran, an Irish historian, pointed to the fact that the scheme of 1880 had 'been written

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<sup>11</sup> Regan, Ann, *They choose Minnesota* (St. Paul, 1981), p.138

<sup>12</sup> <http://www.tcd.ie/irishfilm/showfilm.php?fid=43654>

<sup>13</sup> Delaney, Enda "Directions in *historiography* Our island story? Towards a transnational history of late modern Ireland", in *Irish Historical Studies*, xxxvii, no. 148 (November 2011), p.603-4

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid*, p.619

from an American viewpoint' with 'no attempt ... made to examine it from an Irish perspective'.<sup>15</sup> He did not deviate greatly from Shannon's opinion with regard to assisted emigration but he offered a greater understanding of why the immigrants were forced to leave Ireland. According to Moran the scheme was 'hastily planned' and 'inappropriate to the needs of destitute people'.<sup>16</sup> Furthermore, he stated the selection of the immigrants was also responsible for the failure of the scheme as neither John Ireland nor members of the immigration bureau were directly involved. In defence of the immigrants he argued that, 'to expect such a people to believe even after migration that life would be better in five years' time was to fail to comprehend their background and the existence they had endured'.<sup>17</sup> Moran's research was hugely important in providing a greater insight as to why Nugent's immigrants faced difficulties on the prairie.

In more recent studies, Ann Regan and Bridget Connelly have considered Nugent's immigrants once more. Bridget Connelly is a scholar of folklore and Emeritus Professor of Rhetoric at the University of California but remarkably also a descendant of one of the immigrant families assisted by James Nugent and John Ireland. One particular difficulty identified by more recent scholars is the use of the Irish language, with Regan, Connelly and Moran identifying the lack of English as a difficulty for the immigrants.

Furthermore Connelly also introduces a new aspect to the story which was not considered by Moran or earlier writers of settlements to the Mid-West. Connelly claims a Protestant bias existed which sought to undermine Catholic immigration schemes. A Protestant bias had been previously implied by Ó Cuaig in his documentary when he referenced the existence of Freemasons in Morris in 1880. A very real Protestant bias did exist within the United States from the 1850s but a question remains regarding this particular group of immigrants. As Graceville was a newly established Catholic colony most of the immigrants were Catholics. The question that must be asked is did discrimination against Catholic Irish exist on the Minnesota prairies and if so how prevalent was such discrimination.

In examining Nugent's immigrants, consideration must be given to the immigrants and the environment they left but also consideration must be given to the environment and the people they arrived to. Only a transnational approach can provide the necessary information to allow an assessment as to whether or not Nugent's scheme was a failed attempt to alleviate

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<sup>15</sup> Moran Gerard, "'In Search of the Promised Land", *The Connemara Colonization Scheme to Minnesota, 1880*, in *Éire/Ireland*, 31:3 and 4 (Fall and Winter, 1996), p. 130

<sup>16</sup> Ibid

<sup>17</sup> Ibid p. 148

poverty by assisting families to emigrate. A large body of works exists with regard to Irish emigration to North America; this effort was undertaken by historians such as Arnold Schrier, Oscar Handlin, Laurence J. McCaffrey, Robert E. Kennedy, C.J. Houston, W.J. Smith, David Fitzpatrick, Kerby Miller, P.J. Drudy, D. N. Doyle, E. Delaney and Donald H. Akenson to name but a number of the secondary sources used in this study. However, and as to be expected, the most extensive works have focused in the past on the regions where the Irish congregated in large numbers such as Boston, New York and Chicago and to a lesser extent on other regions such as the South, Southwest and Mid-West of America. For the purposes of this particular study the work of transnational historians, such as Schrier and Miller have shown the use of ‘history from below’, to understand how populations outside of official record keeping can be examined with the use of personal letters and other first-hand accounts such as diaries and memoirs. Of further assistance was David Emmons, *Beyond the American Pale: The Irish in the West, 1845-1910*, which clearly shows the degradation and discrimination which Catholic Irish Americans faced in the decades following the famine.

The history of the Irish in Minnesota has not been considered in great detail with the exception of the work of Ann Regan and James Shannon. The work of Shannon with regard to Irish immigration has primarily been in the context of Catholic colonisation but notwithstanding this, Shannon’s *Catholic Colonization on the Western Frontier* remains of great importance to scholars of Irish Minnesotan history more than half a century after its publication.

In more recent years the writings of Gerard Moran have highlighted the conditions of the people of Connemara and Mayo in the latter half of the nineteenth century.<sup>18</sup> Moran has studied James Nugent’s scheme and the Tuke Committee schemes and outlined the concept of assisted emigration.

## **Primary Sources**

Census information, birth and death records along with other state records were of great assistance in tracing Nugent’s immigrants. Research material from digital sources proved to be of great benefit not only by way of state records but further through the discovery of personal accounts of family history placed on-line. This was of particular importance to the last chapter which focused on the descendants of Nugent’s immigrants. The availability of

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<sup>18</sup> Moran Gerard, *Sending Out Ireland’s Poor, Assisted Emigration to North America in the Nineteenth Century* (Dublin, 2004)

documentary evidence from genealogy organisations and private genealogy companies proved to be extremely helpful. Organisations such as *FamilySearch*, the Genealogical Society of Utah which is operated by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was freely available and an excellent resource particularly for nineteenth century Irish birth records. Other private genealogical companies included Ancestry.com, Find My Past.ie and many others websites including those that have assembled information from graveyards/headstones and local histories.

The more traditional method of research included utilising the resources of the Minnesota Historical Society which provided a number of avenues for primary research purposes including newspapers, the Ignatius Donnelly Papers, Irish-American Colonization Company Records, John Ireland Collection and the Sister Helen Angela Hurley Papers. Surprisingly and disappointedly the Archives Department of the Sisters of St Joseph of Carondelet in St Paul and the Archives of the Archdiocese of St Paul and Minneapolis did not provide an extensive amount of primary material but did however provide material on a number of secondary figures including Sister Grace Aurelia C.S.J. and Father Michael Ryan. The most valuable material with regard to the thoughts of the primary protagonists was to be found at the National Archives in Dublin. Unexpectedly, the Sweetman Family papers provided letters from James Nugent, John Ireland and James Hack Tuke, all of which added greatly to the story of Catholic assisted immigration to the Mid-West.

When considering the immigrants from the far west of Connemara and south Mayo, the contemporary writings of T.A. Finlay and C.R. Browne were of great importance as their writings along with the work of the Congested Districts Board provided the greatest insight to the lives of the immigrants. Thomas Finlay's studies of rural Ireland, in particular Connacht, focused on rural economic development. C.R. Browne was an ethnographer who undertook studies of people of the west of Ireland in the late nineteenth century. Brown along with A.C. Haddon conducted research which included detailed measurements of the population while their writings described how people lived in the latter decades of the nineteenth century. Furthermore, detailed accounts of the poverty of the west of Ireland were also to be found in the writings of James Hack Tuke who retained an interest in Ireland's poorest from the famine years of the 1840s to the establishment of the Congested Districts Board in the 1890s.

## **Outline of Study**

The story of Nugent's immigrants is associated with scandal. Earlier researchers including Shannon, Moynihan and Reardon examined Nugent's immigrants solely as an example of those who failed on the prairie. Later scholars in an attempt to understand the difficulties the immigrants faced lay the blame for their hardship at the door of John Ireland's Colonization Society. What has not been undertaken to date and what this study proposes to do is to take a transnational approach to who these people were, why they were compelled to leave and what happened to them upon their arrival in Minnesota without seeking to lay the responsibility of the hardships they faced on the immigrants or on those who assisted them. A number of unsatisfactory judgements made against the immigrants will be re-examined in an effort to resolve the conflict which lies in the language of blame. In the effort to vindicate one group over the other a number of claims have been made which this study will revisit. The gap that exists which this study will close is an understanding of the immigrants' journey from Connemara to Minnesota in its entirety.

Chapter 1 will examine specific factors which led to some of the poorest families of Connemara and south Mayo being selected for assisted emigration. The social, linguistic and cultural factors which were likely to affect the immigrant's successful integration in the Mid-West will be examined. Many changes had taken place throughout Ireland in the years that followed the famine such as the consolidation of lands and an increase in the numbers of people emigrating to Canada, America and Australia. Chapter 1 will further examine the extent to which experience of earlier assisted emigration efforts informed the Nugent scheme. Previous studies have considered Nugent's immigrants in isolation and in doing so the scheme has been identified as a failure. The responsibility or blame for the 'failure' of Nugent's scheme has been in dispute; however, comparisons with similar efforts to 'shovel out paupers' has not been considered.

One further task to be undertaken in chapter 1 is an examination of the catalyst which brought about the decision to remove 35 families from Connemara and south Mayo to the Mid-West of America. The famine of 1879-80 saw a return of the conditions similar to those which had decimated Ireland's population in the 1840s and the response was a determined effort not to see the devastating consequences of famine return. A number of charities were established to avert famine but in the war to win land rights and votes, charity presented in the form of landlord assistance clashed with the charity established by the Land League.

Chapter 1 will outline the difficulties faced by the emigrants as they struggled to cope with boycotts, evictions, charity and proselytising.

Chapter 2 will examine the historiography of nineteenth century Irish-America as it is important to understand the society and culture into which the immigrants arrived. Were Nugent's immigrants confronted with Anglo Saxon Protestant hatred or had Irish people by 1880 assimilated sufficiently to ensure their arrival did not create fear among the established populations? Chapter 2 will also compare the Irish immigrant experience in Australia with the Irish immigrant experience of the United States. The similarities along with the differences will be examined.

Chapter 3 places the emigrants in Galway and describes their condition prior to departure contrasting these with the conditions pertaining to their destination. Those on both sides of the Atlantic who assisted Nugent will be introduced. As the scheme was not solely organised by James Nugent, Chapter 3 identifies those who assisted the immigrants from when they disembarked in Boston to when they arrived in Graceville. Chapter 3 further considers the history and climate of Minnesota, the prairie life of which offered great advantages with land and good soil in abundance.

Chapter 4 will focus on what is described as 'the event', which is what happened to the immigrants after they arrived at their destination and had secured their homes. As previously stated, the Sweetman Family Papers found at the National Archives in Ireland provided new insight into those who assisted the immigrants in Graceville and furthermore provided insight into the thoughts of John Ireland with regard to the immigrants and assisting the poorest of people to leave Ireland. The chapter will consider new perspectives on the more recent research as new considerations are presented not only about the immigrants but also about those who assisted the immigrants. In some instances new research is provided by the use of oral accounts which requires an examination of the oral/anthropological research used.

Chapter 5 will assess the influence of Nugent's scheme on subsequent efforts. What effect if any did Nugent's efforts have on future proponents of assisted emigration. The schemes established in the 1880s by proponents of assisted emigration such as John Sweetman and James Hack Tuke were undertaken after Nugent's scheme. Nugent's immigrants pale in significance in terms of actual numbers of people who immigrated but in an effort to understand the journey and decisions taken by emigrants forced to leave the west of Ireland in the 1880s, Nugent's immigrant are of considerable importance.

Chapter 6 will focus on Nugent's immigrants in the immediate years after their arrival in Minnesota in 1880. This chapter will also concentrate on a number of families and trace

their genealogy in some cases to the twenty-first century. This transnational approach will allow the reader to follow the journey of Nugent's immigrants from their original locations in the far west of Ireland to their destinations in the United States. The new information will provide the most complete picture of Nugent's immigrants to date and moreover it will allow for further inquiry of other Irish immigrants who left by a similar methods of assisted immigration or those who left as a family group with little savings. The importance of Nugent's immigrants cannot be overstated as they are one of the few groups of impoverished Irish immigrants that can be traced from their point of origin to their U.S. destination and in some cases beyond.

## Chapter 1: Post-Famine Connemara to the Agricultural Crisis of 1879

In June 1880, Thomas Campbell was identified by *The Galway Vindicator* as ‘a well known patriotic Irishman’. Campbell was a colleague of the Liverpool priest James Nugent, and secretary of the Temperance League of the Cross in Westminster. He had resided in England for years but had been sent by Nugent to Galway to assist 35 families to leave Connemara for Boston. Nugent had contracted a large sea vessel, the *Austrian* from the Allen Shipping Company to transport the emigrants. The Galway Harbour Board further provided Nugent with the *Cities of the Tribes* steamer, to transport the passengers to the *Austrian* free of charge. The members of the Harbour Board were excited by the prospect that the large transport vessels of the Allen Line would return to Galway to provide a permanent route to North America. Nugent’s emigration effort was viewed positively by the *Vindicator* editor who described him as ‘a great priest, a patriot and a philanthropist’, further stating that, ‘generations yet unborn will lisp his name in hymns of benediction’. The emigration officer Capt. Kiddle ensured the immigrants safely embarked and the Harbour Board engaged Dr Rice who examined the immigrants and ensured they were in a fit state of health to undertake the voyage.<sup>19</sup> The emigrants had originated in Carna, Carraroe, Killeen and Spiddal in south Connemara and Aughagower in county Mayo.<sup>20</sup>

Against a backdrop of impending famine, those chosen to leave were among the poorest in Ireland. Free emigration or assisted emigration as a method of alleviating distress had been applied throughout the nineteenth century. For the most part, assisting the poorest to leave was an economic consideration with Poor Law Guardians and governments responsible for destitute populations. In a smaller number of cases, the welfare of the poorest was prioritised: charitable efforts transported emigrants to British colonies for a better life. The poverty of the far west of Ireland was Nugent’s greatest concern, and by removing whole families, those that remained behind could increase the size of their holdings.

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<sup>19</sup> *The Galway Vindicator and Connaught Advertiser*, June 5, 1880; *The Galway Express*, 5 June 1880; *Irish Times*, 5 June 1880, p. 5

<sup>20</sup> *The Nation*, 19 June 1880, p.6; W.J. Onahan, Report as Secretary of the Irish Catholic Colonisation Association, 18 June 1880, in the *Helen Angela Hurley compilation in the John Ireland Collection, section 1, notes and citations 1838-1889, of the Minnesota Historical Society’s Manuscript Collection, CBA.165 Box 1*; Connemara has no official boundary, but is identified geographically by a number of fault lines. To the north the mountains of Connemara are separated from those of Mayo by the dramatic fiord of Killary Harbour. To the north-east lies the Maam valley while in the southerly direction the Shannawona fault provides orderly slopes to the sea at Cois Farraige in the east and a spider-web of peninsulas and inlets west of Ros a’Mhíl, Tim Robinson, *Connemara Part 1: Introduction and Gazetteer*, (Folding Landscapes Galway, 1990), pp 6-7



Emigration had long been considered by young Irish males who availed of employment opportunities in Britain and North America. Between the 1770s and the 1840s, emigrants from Wexford and Waterford migrated to Newfoundland. Many worked in the cod industry as seasonal migrants but following the Napoleonic wars, permanent emigration took hold as greater economic opportunities were sought.<sup>21</sup> The longevity of the transfer of emigrants from the south east of Ireland to Newfoundland provides an insight into emigration patterns. Community ties and traditions brought from Ireland continued in Newfoundland, but over time many homeland traits were lost in the homogenising process. A common culture which was essentially Irish emerged but one that was far less local. The study of Inistioge immigrants to Newfoundland showed the importance of 'Old World neighbourhoods' in choosing where to settle.<sup>22</sup> For many who chose permanent emigration, the community bonds that kept them invested in one location did not exist. Emigrants without capital were often forced to travel from one location to the next in search of employment. Nugent's immigrants belong to one of the relatively few impoverished groups that can be traced from their origins to their destination. In order to understand why Nugent assisted some of the poorest people to leave, an examination of a number of nineteenth century schemes is required. Successful transfers often resettled whole communities from one side of the Atlantic to the other. However, sufficient evidence clearly indicates assisting impoverished people was fraught with difficulties.

## **Nineteenth Century Emigration Schemes**

Assisting people to emigrate in times of economic distress conjures up an image of a benevolent government. However, the reality was usually quite different. The authorities were sensitive to the impact of Irish migration to Britain and the associated problems of fever outbreaks, pressure on poor rates and the disruption of British labour markets. State emigration policy was considered in terms of relieving the 'evils of a redundant population' with insurrectionary movements associated with the length and duration of wretchedness and poverty particularly in Ireland.<sup>23</sup> Early schemes to assist emigrants were considered as early

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<sup>21</sup> John Mannion and Fidelma Maddock, 'Old world antecedents, New World adaptations: Inistioge immigrants in Newfoundland', in William Nolan and Kevin Whelan (eds), *Kilkenny: History and Society* (1990), Geography Publications, p 350

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid*, pp 359, 371

<sup>23</sup> P. Grey, 'Shovelling out your paupers': The British State and Irish Famine Migration 1846-50, in *Patterns of Prejudice*, 33:4, October 1999, p.50; *Third report from the Select Committee on Emigration from the United Kingdom: 1827*, HC 1826-7 (550), p.7

as 1813 with efforts focused on populating countries for security and economic purposes. Every official investigation into Irish poverty from 1826 to the Poor Inquiry Commission of 1836 presented emigration schemes as essential for Irish amelioration.<sup>24</sup>

The regulation of passengers was altered by Parliament in 1817, dramatically changing how emigrants travelled to North America. By 1819, Quebec was the busiest immigrant port in North America with 40 per cent of all British immigrants landing there.<sup>25</sup> A report on emigration in 1827 stated that without emigration to keep in check the pauper population of Ireland, which overflowed into Scotland and England with alarming rapidity, the English and Scottish labouring classes were to be left in a 'uniform state of degradation and misery'.<sup>26</sup> The question regarding the adoption of an emigration policy was 'whether the wheat-fed population of Great Britain shall or shall not be supplanted by the potatoe-fed population of Ireland'.<sup>27</sup> Canada became the only destination for some in the 1820s as laws introduced in the United States denied entry to paupers. In 1826, of the 9,000 emigrants who arrived in Quebec, a great portion made it the initial step of their journey to the western parts of the United States. All of those who were bound for rural Pennsylvania did so via Lake Erie while those bound for Ohio travelled via Montreal.<sup>28</sup> Among the greatest emigration undertakings of the 1820s were schemes overseen by Peter Robinson. It is unclear if Nugent was familiar with the efforts of Robinson but when these early initiatives are compared with Nugent's scheme, certain similarities are identified: as such a closer examination of Robinson's schemes is required.

In the spring of 1822 many areas of Ireland were destitute. The Blackwater region of Cork and Limerick had witnessed an increase in violence which had left the propertied class vulnerable. The Rockite movement demanded reductions in rents, tithes and taxes along with an end to evictions. Robert Peel decided that despite the cost to government, it was imperative that assisted emigration be considered. The Under-Secretary of the Colonial office, Robert John Wilmot Horton, engaged Peter Robinson, an honorary member of the executive council of Upper Canada and a member of the legislative assembly, to assist with

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<sup>24</sup> P. Grey, 'Shovelling out your paupers': The British State and the Irish Famine Migration 1846-50, in *Patterns of Prejudice* 33(4), October 1999, pp 47, 53-54

<sup>25</sup> Ibid, pp 25-26

<sup>26</sup> *Third report from the Select Committee on Emigration from the United Kingdom:1827*, HC 1826-7 (550), pp 5, 41

<sup>27</sup> *Third report from the Select Committee on Emigration from the United Kingdom:1827*, HC 1826-7 (550), p.7

<sup>28</sup> *Minutes of evidence from the Second report from the Select Committee on Emigration from the United Kingdom:1827*, HC 1826-27 (237), p.75, q. 884

the emigration programme to Upper Canada.<sup>29</sup> The Robinson schemes were conducted in two stages, in 1823 and 1825.

Robinson's initial settlers were sent to Almonte in the Bathurst District of Upper Canada. This settlement was home to weavers from Lanarkshire sent by the many Glasgow Emigration Committees in 1820-21. The Glasgow emigrants had arrived in a state of utter destitution and suffered great hardships for the first 18-20 months.<sup>30</sup> Prior to being sent to Upper Canada the Glasgow weavers had experienced a decline in employment and income due to the massive influx of Irish migrant labourers who swelled the working population and depressed wages. By the end of the eighteenth century the weaving industry had become increasingly mechanised. The Lowland clearances reduced the demand for farm labour and forced labourers to the cities to find work, usually in the mills. The amount of support Robinson's immigrants received provoked a negative response amongst the older settlers who themselves continued to struggle.<sup>31</sup> Prior to the 1820s those that emigrated from Ireland to Upper Canada were primarily Ulster Presbyterians and Anglicans and consisted mostly of farmers with capital, artisans, shopkeepers, tradesmen and professionals.<sup>32</sup> In the circumstances impoverished Catholics who completely depended upon the British Government were regarded with disdain.<sup>33</sup>

Not all immigrants of different social and religious backgrounds struggled in creating new communities. Immigration from estate towns such as Inistioge to Newfoundland included Protestants and Catholics. However, the positive community ties that existed in Wexford were transferred to Canada. In Newfoundland, Catholics and Protestants alike fused to 'form a relatively homogeneous, egalitarian community on the frontier'.<sup>34</sup> A number of important distinctions exist between those that travelled to Upper Canada and those that

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<sup>29</sup> Moran Gerard, *Sending Out Ireland's Poor, Assisted Emigration to North America in the Nineteenth Century*, p. 22

<sup>30</sup> Cameron Wendy, 'Peter Robinson's Settlers in Peterborough', in Robert O'Driscoll and Lorna Reynolds (eds), *The Untold Story: The Irish in Canada* (Toronto, 1988) p. 343; *Minutes of evidence from the Second report from the Select Committee on Emigration from the United Kingdom: 1827*, HC 1826-27 (237), p.54

<sup>31</sup> Moran Gerard, *Sending Out Ireland's Poor, Assisted Emigration to North America in the Nineteenth Century* (Dublin, 2004) p.25. The Irish in Canada were preceded by a stereotype, 'Irishmen were expected to respond mindlessly to the sight of a club and a green flag'. W.S. Northhouse, of the *London Free Press* stated in 1827, that emigrants from Glasgow should be chosen over Irish emigrants. It was his opinion that the Scots were a people long accustomed to independent habits and were not as reckless as the Irish who were more adjusted to poverty and charity, in Cameron Wendy, 'Peter Robinson's Settlers in Peterborough', in Robert O'Driscoll and Lorna Reynolds (eds), *The Untold Story: The Irish in Canada* (Toronto, 1988) p. 345; *Second report from the Select Committee on Emigration from the United Kingdom: 1827*, HC 1826-27 (237), p.61

<sup>32</sup> K. A. Miller, *Emigrants and Exiles*, (1984) pp 194-196

<sup>33</sup> Trent University Archives News, 'Upper Canada's John Huston', Number 23, September 2007, p.4

<sup>34</sup> Nolan, W. and Whelan, K. (eds.) (1990) *Kilkenny History & Society: Interdisciplinary Essays on the History of an Irish County*. Dublin: Geography Publications, pp 387, 391

immigrated to Newfoundland. Those who left for Newfoundland did so voluntarily and had the means to do so while those who immigrated to the Bathurst district were forced to leave by extreme poverty. Further, many of those who immigrated to Newfoundland were often joining a community that was an extension of the old world they had left behind. Immigrants often joined others who had left in a previous generation. Unlike the very poor Catholic and Protestant communities from Glasgow and Cork, no previous ties had existed and the resentment of having to leave their homeland along with the hardship of establishing a new life was its own challenge. The supports that existed to help create a new sustainable homogenous community in Newfoundland did not exist in Upper Canada.

Despite the difficulties faced by Robinson's immigrants in Upper Canada, by 1825 Robinson's second scheme was oversubscribed with 50,000 applications for 1,500 places.<sup>35</sup> The Robinson approach was held up throughout the nineteenth century as one of the answers to Ireland's poverty but the financial cost of the schemes was considered excessive. The cost of the schemes was hugely important as though the removal of people from Ireland may have been for some a humanitarian effort worth every credit, in public policy terms, the depletion of a pauper class which had the potential to seriously undermine the economic stability of the labouring classes in England and Scotland was of greater concern.<sup>36</sup> Ultimately, the cost of the schemes was responsible for bringing them to an end as they were seen as luxury settlements. Among the proponents of the scheme was Charles Rubridge who assisted Robinson in placing the settlers on the land in 1825. He advocated that land be cleared and even planted so that the new settlers would have a crop on their first year of arrival.<sup>37</sup> Nugent's scheme can thus be compared to Robinson's. The level of assistance provided to the immigrant family upon arrival and in the months that followed differentiated Robinson's schemes from those who primarily considered the cost of passage. By 1880 a number of individuals and organisations were independently considering state-assisted immigration programmes. It is within this setting that previous efforts to successfully transplant large groups of families were considered. As previously noted, the Robinson schemes had been recalled in parliament throughout the nineteenth century. An investigation into the schemes in 1847 approved of the methods applied by Robinson and deemed the schemes to be a

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<sup>35</sup> Moran Gerard, *Sending Out Ireland's Poor, Assisted Emigration to North America in the Nineteenth Century* (Dublin, 2004) p.23

<sup>36</sup> *Minutes of evidence from the third report before the Select Committee on Emigration from the United Kingdom: 1827*, HC 1826-7 (550), p.347, q.3604

<sup>37</sup> Moran, Gerard. *Sending Out Ireland's Poor, Assisted Emigration to North America in the Nineteenth Century* (Dublin, 2004) p.27

success.<sup>38</sup> The recommendations as outlined by Rubridge were applied by Nugent and John Ireland in 1880 in Graceville. The provision of homes, farm implements and land ready for planting were suggestions made by Rubridge to ensure permanent settlements were established. Nugent and Ireland were not only interested in relief but in establishing Catholic settlements on the prairies. Unlike schemes to Australia, New Zealand or South Africa, Nugent's immigration scheme had more similarities with Robinson's scheme. Both schemes involved pioneer settlements, further the landscape, environment and climatic conditions were similar.

### **Orphan-Female Assisted Emigration to Australia**

Assisted emigration, although too costly for state sponsorship continued to be considered after the 1820s. The over-population of districts and the need to populate the colonies ensured the debate continued. The main difficulty faced by advocates of emigration was justifying the cost. By 1880, the genesis of Nugent's plan was to be found not only in Robinson's plan but in the many varying efforts and subsequent reports produced in the decades which preceded it. The Poor Law system provided the incentive landlords needed to encourage emigration. For the purpose of further assessing Nugent's attempt at assisted emigration, the schemes applied from the 1830s to the 1850s must be reviewed. The conditions which prompted emigration from Ireland generally in the 1840s were evident in Connemara in the 1880s. Decades after the Famine, the most remote districts of the west remained living a pre-famine existence which was unsustainable and constantly vulnerable to famine.

In 1843 the Poor Law was modified so that workhouse inmates could be assisted to emigrate when two-thirds of the guardians of a union agreed.<sup>39</sup> By February 1847 there were 63,000 orphans among the workhouse population and by the middle of 1849 this number had risen to 90,000.<sup>40</sup> According to Edward Senior, one of the Poor Law Commissioners, it was of the 'utmost importance' to relieve the workhouse population by means of emigration. Those recommended for emigration were girls aged 13 to 19 years old, as children were

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<sup>38</sup> *Emigration (Canada). Return of the assessed value of the townships in Western Canada settled by pauper emigrants from Ireland between 1825 and 1828, and their present condition; - also, particulars of the formation of "the Canada Emigration Association" established at Toronto in 1840*, HC 1847-48 (368) pp 14-19

<sup>39</sup> Moran, *Sending Out Ireland's Poor*, pp 126-127

<sup>40</sup> Robins, Joseph, 'The emigration of workhouse children to Australia in the nineteenth century' in John O'Brien and Pauric Travers (eds), *The Irish emigrant experience in Australia* (Dublin, 1991), p.34

considered ‘dead weight’ to a workhouse as their care was long term and the cost great.<sup>41</sup> By 1848 the Australian colonies were more and more seen as the answer to ridding Ireland of the cost of maintaining an oversupply of vulnerable young people. By March 1848 the Emigration Commissioners had worked out a scheme with the Irish Poor Law Commissioners which involved the transfer of 100,000 females from Britain and Ireland to the Australian colony.<sup>42</sup>

In June 1848 the first Irish orphan ship the *Earl Grey* sailed from Plymouth to Sydney with 185 girls from ten unions mainly, in Ulster.<sup>43</sup> Two ships were sent each month from March 1848 to July 1849, a total of 35 ships which carried 7,340 orphan emigrants at a cost of £100,000.<sup>44</sup> Although many supported the orphan emigration schemes there were those who were opposed to the removal of young women from Ireland. The *Nation* described the scheme as one of the most ‘diabolical proposals ever made or conceived since Cromwell’s time’.<sup>45</sup> In Australia there were some who opposed the funding of the orphans solely by the Australian Government. The *Sydney Morning Herald* stated Australia’s need to populate the colony was not as great as the English government’s desperate need to rid itself of a large pauper population on the verge of civil unrest.<sup>46</sup> One particularly loud voice was that of Dr John Dunmore Lang who wrote a series of letters to the English press including a weekly letter from March 1848 in the evangelical *British Banner*. In a letter to the *Sydney Morning Herald* prior to the arrival of the first group of orphan immigrants, Lang approved of Earl Grey’s opposition to an emigration loan for the colony as it would merely swamp the colony with ‘Tipperary’.<sup>47</sup> According to Collingwood, Lang’s opposition to South of Ireland Catholic immigrants was on racial and religious grounds which fed into a fear that existed in the Australian colonies, a fear more vehemently expressed due to the immigrants being pauper women.<sup>48</sup> The *Melbourne Argus* which also opposed the schemes reported an Irish girl who was brought before the police bench with charges of ‘insolence and general bad character’. Along with this, the charge that only one in every ten of the female emigrants satisfied their employers did not bring the support from the colony which was needed for the

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<sup>41</sup> *Third Report from the Select Committee on Poor Laws (Ireland)*, qq. 2331-2336, HC 1849 (93), vx, pt.1

<sup>42</sup> *Nation*, 26 February 1848

<sup>43</sup> Collingwood Judy, “Irish Workhouse Children in Australia”, in John O’Brien and Pauric Travers (eds), *The Irish emigrant experience in Australia* (Dublin, 1991), pp 47-48

<sup>44</sup> *Emigration (North American and Australian colonies) 1849*, HC (593)(593II) p.252

<sup>45</sup> *Nation*, 26 February 1848

<sup>46</sup> *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 29 September 1848, p.2

<sup>47</sup> *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 17 April, 1848, p.3

<sup>48</sup> Collingwood Judy, “Irish Workhouse Children in Australia”, p.56

emigration programmes to continue.<sup>49</sup> Although some publications such as the *People's Advocate* expressed the view that the colonies must be thankful that in the absence of English and Scottish emigrants Irish emigrants were willing to travel, it would appear that there were far more reports opposing than supporting the transportation of pauper Irish and none more viciously expressed than those in the *Argus*.<sup>50</sup>

With criticism of the transfer of female orphans emanating from both sides, the schemes soon ended. Of the 4,175 orphan girls sent out from Irish workhouses during the two years the scheme was in operation, 2,253 went to Sydney, 1,255 to Port Philip, and 606 to Adelaide. The remaining sixty-one had been taken to the Cape of Good Hope.<sup>51</sup> Irish Catholic communities in Australia who were advocates of the scheme were disappointed that the scheme ended. Collingwood states that national and religious prejudices finally outweighed economic considerations. With these prejudices already known of prior to the undertaking of the scheme, had the British government handled the situation more sensitively a more positive outcome could have been achieved.<sup>52</sup> Trevor McClaughlin who studied the lives of the girls who settled in the Australian colony states the orphans' life experience were as 'complex as the human condition itself'.<sup>53</sup> Many of the orphans successfully assimilated but others were not as fortunate.

### **Famine: Assisted Emigration to Clear Estates**

The introduction of the Poor Law in the late 1830s taxed property locally to pay for the support of the poor. The rates for tenants with farms under the value of £4 were to be paid for by the landlord. The Shirley Estate of Monaghan, according to a letter written by Lord Lismore, had 3,000 tenants who did not pay more than £5 in rent and as such the new law placed the responsibility of relief upon the estate itself.<sup>54</sup> Changes in the Poor Law in 1843 allowed guardians to assist paupers to emigrate when two thirds of them were in agreement.

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<sup>49</sup> *The Melbourne Argus*, 2 March 1849 p. 4

<sup>50</sup> Collingwood Judy, "Irish Workhouse Children in Australia", p.57; *The Melbourne Argus*, 24 January, 1850, p. 2

<sup>51</sup> Robins, Joseph, 'The emigration of workhouse children to Australia in the nineteenth century', p.42

<sup>52</sup> Collingwood Judy, "Irish Workhouse Children in Australia", p.58

<sup>53</sup> Trevor McClaughlin, 'Lost Children? Irish Famine Orphans in Australia' in *History Ireland*, 8:4 (Winter, 2000) p.34

<sup>54</sup> P.J. Duffy, 'Disencumbering Our Crowded Places': theory and practice of estate emigration schemes in mid-nineteenth century Ireland' in P.J. Duffy (ed.) *To and from Ireland: Planned Migration Schemes c. 1600-2000* (Dublin, 2004), p.81

However, unions remained reluctant to assist paupers to emigrate because of the outlay involved; between 1844 and 1846 only 304 people were assisted by unions.<sup>55</sup> By the mid 1840s, however, as the poor rates rose, landlords and agents calculated it would cost less to send paupers or potential paupers to the colonies than to maintain them in the workhouse for a year. Tenants vulnerable to pauperisation were seen as dead weights upon estates.<sup>56</sup> After the introduction of the Poor Law and with the responsibility of the poor placed on the landlord, pauper tenants were described as ‘useless’, ‘superabundant’ and ‘surplus’ while the term, ‘shovelling out paupers’ was commonly used.<sup>57</sup> Estate records provide the most detailed accounts of the numbers who emigrated with ten landlords responsible for assisting 30,000 people to leave.<sup>58</sup> The Lansdowne estate in Kerry assisted 3,360 pauper emigrants and levelled 862 houses. The practice of levelling homes was part of the depopulation process, done to prevent the return of the tenants and to prevent paupers from establishing themselves as squatters on the property. The Wandesford estate in Kilkenny assisted up to 5,800 between 1840 and 1855, the Fitzwilliam estates in Wicklow sent almost 6,000 between 1847 and 1856. Between 1851 and 1854 the Bath estate of Monaghan sent approximately 3,000 while the Palmerston estate in Sligo assisted 4,292 between 1847 and 1850.<sup>59</sup> The Shirley estate was the largest landed property in Co. Monaghan by 1845 with 20,500 people on the 26,000 acre property. The average size of holding was eight acres but a large proportion of farms were less than five acres.<sup>60</sup> The Gore Booth estate in Sligo consisted of 32,000 acres but unlike other landlords Gore Booth resided on his estate.<sup>61</sup> Congestion and over-population were problems for most large estates: the rundale system associated with

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<sup>55</sup> *A return in the number of persons who have emigrated at the expense of the different poor law unions in Ireland, in the years 1844, 1845, and 1846*, HC 1847 (255), lvi, p.1

<sup>56</sup> P.J. Duffy, ‘Disencumbering Our Crowded Places’: theory and practice of estate emigration schemes in mid-nineteenth century Ireland’, p.90

<sup>57</sup> P.J. Duffy, ‘Disencumbering Our crowded Places’: theory and practice of estate emigration schemes in mid-nineteenth century Ireland’, p.82

<sup>58</sup> Moran, *Sending Out Ireland’s Poor*, p.38

<sup>59</sup> P.J. Duffy, ‘Disencumbering Our crowded Places’: theory and practice of estate emigration schemes in mid-nineteenth century Ireland’, p.84

<sup>60</sup> *Report from her Majesty’s Commissioners of Inquiry into the state of the law and practice in respect to the occupation of land in Ireland*. HC 1845, (605)(606), p.932

<sup>61</sup> G. Moran, Sir Robert Gore Booth and his landed estate in County Sligo, 1814-1876. Land, famine, emigration and politics. *Maynooth Studies in Local History*. (Dublin, 2006), p. 7



middlemen and the sub-division of land meant that landlords could do little about improving estates until leases ran out.<sup>62</sup>

At the government inquiry of 1845, investigating the law and practice pertaining to land holdings in Ireland, John Sheil commented upon the poverty of Mr. Shirley's tenants which he said was due to subdivision of land along with the sale of land to pay rent and debts.<sup>63</sup> In 1843 when William Stewart Trench was appointed estate manager for the Shirley estate, disturbances along with a rent strike took place to demand rent reductions. Trench produced a private report for Shirley where he outlined a policy of encouraging emigration from the estate.<sup>64</sup> By 1844 the Shirley estate began to encourage emigration under the stewardship of George Morant who replaced Trench. According to Rev. Thomas Gibson, by 1845 there was a 'great spirit of emigration', with contact between those who had already emigrated and those who remained in Monaghan.<sup>65</sup> In juxtaposing the management records of the Shirley Estate with the description of an eviction and levelling of a home it can be seen that the process of clearing lands by assisting families to leave Ireland was traumatic where often families had no other option but to accept the passage out of Ireland.<sup>66</sup>

Identifying the tenants who volunteered to leave and those who were encouraged to leave by estate policies designed to clear lands is all the more difficult with the onset of the Famine. Unable to pay rents, tenants were evicted and as the conditions of the workhouses deteriorated, leaving for North America may have been the most proactive step for survival. Gore Booth provided an account of the expenses incurred by the estate for families who emigrated, from the townland of Ballygilgan, between the years 1835 and 1842 before the onset of the Famine. The estate invested £784 in this effort with a return on this investment due from increased rents from the distribution of the lands to other tenant farmers.<sup>67</sup> At the height of the famine Gore Booth hired cargo ships and had them customised to transfer passengers to North America. In North America the evidence of famine was clear in the

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<sup>62</sup> G. Moran, *Sir Robert Gore Booth and his Landed Estate in County Sligo, 1814-1876*, p. 15

<sup>63</sup> *Report from her Majesty's Commissioners of Inquiry into the state of the law and practice in respect to the occupation of land in Ireland*. HC 1845, (605)(606), p.885

<sup>64</sup> Duffy, P.J. 'Assisted Emigration from the Shirley Estate 1843-54' in *Clogher Record*, 14:2 (1992), p.14

<sup>65</sup> *Report from her Majesty's Commissioners of Inquiry into the state of the law and practice in respect to the occupation of land in Ireland*. HC 1845, (605)(606), p.899

<sup>66</sup> *The Nation*, 22 September 1849, pp 4, 13; *Report from her Majesty's Commissioners of Inquiry into the state of the law and practice in respect to the occupation of land in Ireland*. HC 1845, (605)(606), p.892

<sup>67</sup> *Second report from the Select Committee of the House of Lords, on colonization from Ireland; together with the further minutes of evidence*. HC, 1847-48 (593), p. 258-9, q. 2639

condition of the arriving helpless paupers. The vessels which Gore Booth had privately chartered received a mixed response. New Brunswick Emigration Agent, Moses H. Perley, indicated in July 1847 that although 3,219 fewer emigrants arrived in New Brunswick when compared with the previous year the number of deaths was much higher with 30 occurring in 1846 and 437 in 1847. Perley felt Gore Booth was exporting paupers to rid his estate of any responsibility and indeed cost.<sup>68</sup>

One of the vessels chartered by Gore Booth, the *Aeolus*, was of grave concern to the Canadian authorities.<sup>69</sup> However, not all vessels chartered by Gore Booth in 1847 contained destitute paupers. The *Yeoman* arrived in St. John in August with 514 passengers. It would seem that following the arrival of the *Aeolus* the Canadian authorities were unwilling to accept destitute paupers.<sup>70</sup> The third ship chartered by Gore Booth, the *Lady Sale*, landed at St John with 150 emigrants from the Gore Booth Estate and 200 from the Palmerston estate on 9 September 1847.<sup>71</sup> Three deaths had occurred on board and a further 15 people were sick. According to the Emigration Office, the emigrants were reported to be of a worse class than those who arrived by the *Aeolus* and *Yeoman* from the same estate, Perley wrote, ‘many of them will become a public burthen from the moment of their landing’.<sup>72</sup>

The condition of emigrants arriving at Canadian ports was further commented upon by Adam Ferrie who was a member of the Legislative Council of Canada, Chairman of the Lay Commission and Chairman of the Emigration Committee of New Brunswick. Ferrie was scathing in his criticisms of Irish landlords and noted the two ships which in part contained emigrants from Lord Palmerstown’s estate.<sup>73</sup> Ferrie further stated that of the 100,000 persons who were transferred by Irish landlords to Canada from May to December 1847, it was estimated that at least 50,000 were paupers ‘from the bye-lanes, poor-houses, and purlieu of large and populous cities’. He further claimed that 5,000 emigrants died on their passage to

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<sup>68</sup> *Emigration. Papers relative to emigration to the British provinces in North America, and to the Australian colonies. part 1. British provinces in North America.* HC 1847-48 (50) (50-II), xlvii.1, pp 89-90

<sup>69</sup> *Second report from the Select Committee of the House of Lords, on Colonization from Ireland; together with the further minutes of evidence.* HC 1848, (593), xvii, p. 262-3, qq 2656-2667

<sup>70</sup> *Emigration. Papers relative to emigration to the British provinces in North America, and to the Australian colonies. part 1. British provinces in North America.* HC 1847-48 (50) (50-II), xlvii.1, p.106

<sup>71</sup> Power, Thomas. *The Palmerstown Estate in County Sligo in To and from Ireland: Planned Migration Schemes c. 1600-2000* (Dublin, 2004), p.129

<sup>72</sup> *Emigration. Papers relative to emigration to the British provinces in North America, and to the Australian colonies. part 1. British provinces in North America.* HC 1847-48 (50) (50-II), xlvii.1, p.111

<sup>73</sup> *Papers relative to emigration to the British provinces in North America,* HC 1847-8 (964), xlvii, pp 36-37

Canada and of those who landed on Canadian shores 20,000 fell victim to disease while the orphan children who survived had to be provided for and educated by the Canadian authorities.<sup>74</sup> According to Thomas Power, 1847 was the most significant year for immigration to New Brunswick. By October 15,269 immigrants embarked there and of this amount one-third proceeded to the United States. Those who went to the U.S. were the heads of households while their dependants became the responsibility of the authorities in New Brunswick.<sup>75</sup>

Many of the tenants of the Gore Booth estate along with tenants from the Palmerstown and Lansdowne estates left Canada and ended up living in the most infamous slum in nineteenth-century America known as Five Points in New York City. In the 1840s this district was described as a concentration of ‘seedy saloons, bawdy dancehalls, filthy tenements, and brazen prostitutes’.<sup>76</sup> Lord Lansdowne spent a considerable sum in removing his paupers; by the end of 1851 he had spent £9,500. From December 1850 to March 1851 Lansdowne sent 1,700 tenants from Kenmare to New York and by the end of 1851 a further 1,300 tenants had joined them. The poverty of the Lansdowne immigrants created an immediate reaction with newspapers singling them out for condemnation. According to Anbinder, ‘even in a city teeming with impoverished newcomers, the plight of the Lansdowne emigrants aroused special indignation’. In Five Points the Kerry natives crowded into ramshackle buildings often with minimal light in two of the neighbourhood’s twenty or so blocks. Most Lansdowne immigrants rented space in their own homes to a few lodgers while others became full-time boarding house keepers. Brothels were to be found in most Lansdowne tenement buildings during the early 1850s. The evidence suggests that Lansdowne tenants lived among brothel keepers rather than worked for them. Male Lansdowne immigrants held the city’s lowest-paying jobs and were ten times less likely than the typical Five Pointers to work as skilled artisans and significantly less likely to own their own business.<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>74</sup> *Papers relative to emigration to the British provinces in North America*, HC 1847-8 (964), xlvii, p.42

<sup>75</sup> Power, Thomas. The Palmerstown Estate in County Sligo in *To and from Ireland: Planned Migration Schemes c. 1600-2000* (Dublin, 2004), pp 131-132

<sup>76</sup> For an account of the background situation at Five Points see Tyler Anbinder, “We will dirk every mother’s son of you: Five points and the Irish conquest of New York Politics”; in *Éire/Ireland*, 36: 1-2 (2001), pp 29-31

<sup>77</sup> Anbinder, Tyler. From Famine to Five Points: Lord Lansdowne’s Irish Tenants Encounter North America’s Most Notorious Slum, *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 107, No. 2 (April 2002), pp 364-380

Despite the hardships of Five Points about 50 per cent of Lansdowne families opened bank accounts at the Emigrants Savings Bank by mid-1855.<sup>78</sup> Although natives accumulated wealth more readily, Anbinder states, Lansdowne Immigrants' 'saved a lot more than anyone who has read the pessimistic portrayals of the famine immigrants would have imagined'.<sup>79</sup> The median famine immigrant had savings equal to more than six months of pay in the bank. A third of labourers had more than a year's pay on deposit. Savings were important for those with the least reliable income. Labourers were required to feed their families when work was not available in winter. Savings were further used to fund weddings or burials, provide a nest egg in case the breadwinner died, and to fund new businesses. Natives of County Kerry, Mayo and Galway accumulated double the savings of the median depositor.<sup>80</sup> Despite being able to relocate to cleaner and safer districts many Lansdowne immigrants chose to remain in Five Points.<sup>81</sup> The Famine Irish faced discrimination and it may have been a case of safety in numbers along with a sense of community where the traditions of Kerry were upheld in Five Points. It was not until the second and subsequent generations that the Famine Irish began to be accepted by the Protestant native born American majority. The clearances that ensured immigrants arrived in utter destitution were not only resented by those who received them. Immigrants too resented the forced nature of their departure and in turn were quick to join the ranks of Irish-American organisations.

### **Post Famine Assisted Emigration**

By 1849 further changes were made to the Poor Law which allowed guardians to apply for loans from the Commissioners to pay for emigration to the colonies. After 1850 a more positive attitude prevailed to emigration which was due in part to remittance letters and the fact that a great number of clearances had already taken place with estates being more peaceful. The involvement of the poor law unions in emigration after 1850 meant unions provided direct assistance by either funding the complete cost or the partial cost with

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<sup>78</sup> Anbinder, Tyler. From Famine to Five Points: Lord Lansdowne's Irish Tenants Encounter North America's Most Notorious Slum, *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 107, No. 2 (April 2002), p382

<sup>79</sup> Anbinder, Tyler. Moving beyond "Rags to Riches": New York's Irish Famine Immigrants and Their Surprising Savings Accounts, *The Journal of American History* (2012) 99 (3): p 751

<sup>80</sup> Anbinder, Tyler. 'Moving beyond "Rags to Riches": New York's Irish Famine Immigrants and Their Surprising Savings Accounts', *The Journal of American History* (2012) 99 (3): pp 753-761

<sup>81</sup> Anbinder, Tyler. 'From Famine to Five Points: Lord Lansdowne's Irish Tenants Encounter North America's Most Notorious Slum', *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 107, No. 2 (April 2002), p385

remittance money and landlord assistance providing the balance.<sup>82</sup> Between May 1850 and March 1851, a total of 1,721 workhouse paupers were assisted to leave to North America and Canada. From 1851 to 1852 a further 5,971 assisted immigrants arrived in Canada of whom 3,092 were assisted by unions.<sup>83</sup>

From an early stage, unions had put in place structures to deal with pauper emigration having learned from their experience of sending orphan girls to Australia. By the 1850s emigrants were being well received in Canada, A.C. Buchanan in July 1852 writing that emigrants were in demand in Toronto and that an increased demand existed throughout the country for labourers.<sup>84</sup> In the fifty years following the famine, from 1849 to 1906, unions assisted 45,000 people to leave. The two main phases of assisted emigration after the famine occurred in the 1860s and the 1880s.<sup>85</sup>

The agricultural crisis of the early 1860s concerned authorities who once more considered assisted emigration of large numbers of the population as a method of alleviating poverty. Between 1862 and 1865 with the support of the Queensland Immigration Society (QIS) which had been established by the Bishop of Queensland, James Quinn, 6,618 people were assisted to leave for Australia.<sup>86</sup> A number of similarities existed between the Nugent emigration plan of 1880 and Quinn's effort in the 1860s. Both plans attempted to alleviate desperate communities who faced starvation while at the same time reflecting the need for labour in the place of relocation.

The Ireland of the 1850s, the aftermath of the famine, witnessed massive changes. In King's County Lord Digby set about cancelling and rearranging yearly leases. In 1857 Digby engaged the services of land agent William Steward Trench and the following five years of Trench policies led to acrimony which resulted in claims of wholesale eviction, the illegal retention of compensation funds and the responding activities of local Ribbonmen.<sup>87</sup> In 1861 *the Nation* listed 246 people from 49 families who had been evicted over the previous three

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<sup>82</sup> Moran, Gerard, *Sending Out Ireland's Poor*, pp 136-137

<sup>83</sup> Moran, Gerard, *Sending Out Ireland's Poor*, pp 141-142

<sup>84</sup> Correspondence from A.C. Buchanan dated 28 July 1852 in Emigration. *Papers relative to emigration to the North American colonies*, HC 1852-53 (1650) lxviii, p.3

<sup>85</sup> Moran, *Sending Out Ireland's Poor*, p.159

<sup>86</sup> Moran, *Sending Out Ireland's Poor*, p.160

<sup>87</sup> Harrison, Jennifer, 'From Kings County to "Quinn'sland"' in William Nolan and Timothy O'Neill (eds), *Offaly: History and Society* (Dublin, 1998), pp 733- 735

years from the Geashill estate.<sup>88</sup> The evicted tenants were homeless, penniless and near starvation, and began crowding into the streets of Tullamore. These same tenants with little other choice became the first to avail of a passage to Australia with the help of Father Dunne in Tullamore who had entered into a partnership with Bishop Quinn of the QIS. Similar to Nugent's scheme the partnership which existed consisted of one member selecting emigrants in Ireland and the other member receiving the immigrants at the newly established settlements.

In 1859, Queensland had been declared a separate colony and with capital and labour essential for the development of the colony, the immigration programmes introduced earlier by the New South Wales authorities were continued. By August 1862 thirteen ships supported by QIS had been sent to Queensland. Henry Jordan, Queensland Immigration Agent was commissioned by the Colonial Government to direct the emigration from the United Kingdom to Queensland in May 1862. Jordan ensured that only emigrants selected by him were eligible. This particular development arose from charges made against the QIS that emigrants it chose were not suitable. Further accusations concerned sectarian abuse and what was identified as 'a desire to grasp political power through malpractice involving the land orders and the cash they generated'.<sup>89</sup> After Jordan took control of the emigration, individuals were made to sign a statement that the land order received at no cost to the immigrant family would not be transferred to another person. According to Jennifer Harrison, a study of the land registers revealed ambiguities. Some passengers used their land order to finance their passage while a 'fair number' signed over their first or second land order to church authorities. Quinn, according to Harrison was attracted to the scheme not only on humanitarian grounds but also because of the propensity to make money.<sup>90</sup> The involvement of Catholic Bishops in both the Quinn and Nugent immigration schemes imply similarities. However, as this study is not a comparative study of prominent Catholic Church members and assisted emigration, any further common features, if any, will not be explored. The inclusion of the Quinn immigration effort is to highlight the great number and indeed the various methods applied to assisted emigration as a concept. Quinn's immigration efforts

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<sup>88</sup> *The Nation*, 15 June 1861.

<sup>89</sup> Harrison, Jennifer, 'From Kings County to "Quinn'sland"' in William Nolan and Timothy O'Neill (eds), *Offaly: History and Society* (Dublin, 1998), p.750

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*, p.751

were their own success, the number of emigrants assisted in one year by Quinn is noteworthy. Thirteen ships sailed from Ireland to New South Wales in 1862 with 6,618 passengers with more than one third or 2,808 passengers sponsored by the QIS.<sup>91</sup>

The Quinn scheme was not the only assisted emigration effort of the early 1860s. Between 1862 and 1864, a further 668 people were assisted to leave. Although the Canadian Department of Agriculture and Emigration sought large numbers of farm labourers, the Canadian authorities were not prepared to finance the schemes.<sup>92</sup> Overall, the emigration response to the agricultural downturn of the 1860s was limited and assisted emigration ceased once more with economic improvement.

Throughout the nineteenth century, the emigration schemes that have been outlined, shared many common features. All emigrants were provided with free passage, while the greatest concern for authorities was how Ireland benefitted by getting rid of surplus population. As impoverished vulnerable immigrants, they faced discrimination and were resented by the communities they arrived into. In Canada in the 1820s, Robinson's immigrants faced a backlash from the Glasgow weavers who had left Scotland due to the massive influx of Irish migrant labourers. Following the famine, destitute orphans were discriminated against as were those who were cleared from estates. The Australian and Canadian authorities initially welcomed Irish immigrants but when it was realised how poor they were, and indeed the cost to the authorities for their care, attitudes changed. Nugent sent vulnerable immigrants to the U.S. in 1880 – it is important to appreciate how impoverished these immigrants were – as in the majority of instances, levels of poverty, had direct consequences for the level of discrimination and resentment receiving communities had towards new immigrants. As such, an examination of the reasons why Nugent's immigrants were so destitute is required.

### **The Return of Famine to the West of Ireland**

It was in response to reports of starvation in Ireland in 1879 that James Nugent travelled to the west of Ireland and decided upon a plan to permanently alleviate the circumstances of some of the poorest there. The disaster which began as a food and income

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<sup>91</sup> Harrison, Jennifer, 'From Kings County to "Quinn'sland"' in William Nolan and Timothy O'Neill (eds), *Offaly: History and Society* (Dublin, 1998), p.751

<sup>92</sup> Moran, *Sending Out Ireland's Poor*, p. 160

crisis escalated rapidly and led to the strengthening of organisations demanding land reform. The Land League under the stewardship of Michael Davitt and Charles Stewart Parnell provided an umbrella for all social classes to vent their grievances. The inalienable land rights denied to the Irish were seen as a cause of the distress and reform not charity was the response demanded.

The distress of the Irish agricultural population was highlighted in the summer of 1879 with questions put to the Chief Secretary for Ireland in Parliament.<sup>93</sup> By August the *Irish Times* stated 'it would be a miracle if the small farmers occupying holdings in Connemara and other districts where the land is poor and rocky were not in a distressed state'.<sup>94</sup> By the late autumn of 1879 the harrowing reports of destitution persuaded the government to send commissioners to assess the situation. The investigators were horrified at what they found. A family in Derryvoreda, near Recess was described as follows: 'the people were living skeletons, their faces like parchment. They were scarcely able to crawl and there was not a house with any food in it. It was appalling'.<sup>95</sup> Fr Griffen of Parke, near Castlebar, reported there were 500 destitute families living on less than eight acres in his parish. The entire populations of Mulranny, Turlough and Addergoole were on the relief lists with 5,000 more people dependent on relief in Clifden and a further 4,000 people in Letterfrack.<sup>96</sup>

When two-thirds of the potato crop failed in the autumn of 1879, the worst failure since the 1840s, the implications for the 250,000 people who were dependent upon them were disastrous. By January 1880 no food was available and there was no means of purchasing food. According to the Mansion House Relief Committee Report of 1881 there were three substantial guarantees against the repeat of the scenes of 1846: the population was less, Indian meal could be provided cheaply, and a considerable part of the agricultural class did not solely depend on the potato for their existence.<sup>97</sup> This could be stated with regard to Ireland in general, but could not be stated with regard to Mayo and parts of Connemara which had remained in a pre-famine condition. The situation in districts of Mayo and western Galway by the late 1870s had changed little from the 1840s: the population had not declined to the same extent as the rest of the country and whole communities were dependent on migrants' earnings which were no longer available.

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<sup>93</sup> *Irish Times*, 28 June, 1879, p.2

<sup>94</sup> *Irish Times*, 12, 26 August, 1879

<sup>95</sup> Murray, J. P., 'A Lesser Known Famine Crisis in Galway 1879/80', Galway Roots, *Clanna na Gaillimhe*, Vol. IV 1996-97, *Journal of the Galway Family History Society*, (Galway, 1996), p.93

<sup>96</sup> Moran, Gerard, 'Near Famine: The crisis in the West of Ireland, 1879-82', (1997), *Irish Studies Review*, 5:18, pp 15, 16

<sup>97</sup> *Proceedings of the Dublin Mansion House Relief Committee 1880*, (Browne and Nolan, 1881), p.5



Efforts to relieve communities began in earnest by 1879. Famine had been partly staved off from January to August by credit being made available. Migrant earnings allowed many to borrow but credit tightened when shopkeepers themselves found it difficult to obtain credit.<sup>98</sup> Along with a dramatic decline in credit there was also a decline of over £3.5 million in bank deposits between 1876 and 1880 which resulted in further tightening credit with less available to invest in livestock.<sup>99</sup> Ó Gráda highlights early indicators which were seen by the low levels of economic activity. Year-to-year changes in banknote circulation for 1845-1914 show the least amount of activity occurred after the famine of the 1840s in 1877-80.<sup>100</sup> The tightening of credit meant smaller tenants and labourers were unable to borrow for the passage to England. By late 1879, with credit frozen, the demand for land reform grew at an exponential rate as evictions increased along with destitution.

The early warning signs of impending famine were met in parliament with doubt and scepticism, many seeing the claims as an elaborate part of agrarian agitation. It was not only the loss of income from the kelp industry which created hardship. Migrant workers who supported local economies also saw a dramatic decline in income. Those most dependent on migrant earnings for rent and food supplies did not earn a sufficient amount to keep a store for any non-earning period. Applications to the Mansion House Committee identified those most in need as ‘small struggling tenant farmers’ who were suffering due to ‘excessive rent, and a failure of the potato crop for the last three years, and a depression in the value of stock and agricultural produce and at present the want of employment’.<sup>101</sup> By 1880 the loss to the west of Ireland was £250,000 as migrant earnings were reduced by between one third and two thirds and the number of migrants fell as many remained in Ireland unable to obtain the fare.<sup>102</sup>

## Response to the Agricultural Crisis

By summer 1879 the agricultural crisis which was three years in existence led to the demand for rent reductions and the transfer of land ownership to tenants. Land reformer,

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<sup>98</sup> Moran, Gerard, ‘Famine and the Land War: Relief and Distress in Mayo, 1879-1881, Part 1’ in *Cathair Na Mart*, Vol. 5, No. 1 (1985), p.58

<sup>99</sup> *Proceedings of the Dublin Mansion House Relief Committee 1880*, (Browne and Nolan, 1881), p.6

<sup>100</sup> Ó Gráda, C., *Ireland A New Economic History 1780-1939* (Oxford, 1994), pp 250-51; *The Nation*, 28 February, 1880, p.9; Declining bank deposits and notes together showed a decrease of £5,236,000 in the Irish economy

<sup>101</sup> James Heany to Mansion House relief fund, 11 April 1880, (Dublin City Library Archives, (D.C.A.), Mansion House relief fund, Ch1/52/287, Kilgeever Co. Mayo)

<sup>102</sup> Hancock, ‘On the Equal Importance of the Education, Poor-law, Cheap Law for Small holders, and Land Questions, at the Present Crisis’ in *Statistical and Social Inquiry Society of Ireland Journal*, (April, 1880), p.53

James Daly, and his newspaper the *Connaught Telegraph* became the vehicle that mobilised thousands for what was initially a Mayo-based land movement. In February 1880, at a mass meeting in Straide in county Mayo, Davitt told the 15,000 people in attendance that England deprived Ireland of seven million pounds annually for imperial taxation. According to Davitt the English government further allowed an infamous land system to ‘rob our country of fifteen or twenty millions more each year to support some nine or twelve thousand lazy landlords’.<sup>103</sup> The traditional image of agriculture in the west of Ireland was one where unscrupulous landlords bore down upon farmers demanding high rents. However, according to Jordan, both Vaughan and Solow ‘stress that the farmers were the chief beneficiaries of the post-famine price rises’.<sup>104</sup> According to Bull, ‘it was the pusillanimity of landlords afraid to exact reasonable rents who put at risk the interests of the whole agriculture sector, including landlords and the tenants’.<sup>105</sup> Land was further responsible for Ireland’s ‘population drama’, particularly the inheritance of land and the laws and practices governing land tenure. Changes in the way families transferred farms from one generation to the next created a distinct new form of post-famine household organisation.<sup>106</sup>

Overall, rents may not have increased nationally but this was not the reality for the farmers who were paying rents from 100 to 300 per cent over the poor law valuation in Mayo in 1879. Examples were highlighted by the *Connaught Telegraph* where rents on individual holdings had increased from £18 in 1867 to £44 in 1879.<sup>107</sup> On the Renvyle estate ten miles outside of Clifden, tenants were not only forced to pay land rents twice and three times the poor law valuation but four further rents including a turf rent, a black weed rent, a drift weed rent, and a kelp rent.<sup>108</sup> Regardless of profits earned by landlords or farmers it was the argument of the Irish National Land League during the depression of 1877-80 that rent was a share of profits from the land and when there were no profits there could be no rent.<sup>109</sup>

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<sup>103</sup> *The Connaught Telegraph*, 7 February, 1880, p.3

<sup>104</sup> Jordan, D.E. *Land and Popular Politics in Ireland* (Cambridge, 1994), p.147

<sup>105</sup> Philip Bull, *Land, Politics and Nationalism* (Dublin, 1996), p.19

<sup>106</sup> Guinnane, Timothy, W., *The Vanishing Irish, Households, Migration, and the Rural Economy in Ireland*, pp. 15-16

<sup>107</sup> *The Connaught Telegraph*, 1 November, 1879, p.2

<sup>108</sup> *The Nation*, January 10, 1880, p.3

<sup>109</sup> Jordan, D.E., *Land and Popular Politics in Ireland* (Cambridge, 1994), pp 156-7. Such views were in keeping with the political economists, J. S. Mill and J.E. Cairnes, whose writings were often quoted from land agitation platforms.

## The Increase of Evictions

As the debate of land ownership continued the very raw experience of those who lost homes by forceful eviction highlighted the real vulnerability which existed for the poorest. By January 1880, every family of the 28 homes in the village of Dunelleash in Mayo owed three and a half years rent and ‘last year’s meal yet’.<sup>110</sup> Moreover, of the 6,000 people in the town of Ballina 2,000 were without employment and lived in absolute poverty.<sup>111</sup> One further example of the destitution which occurred when rent exceeded 300 per cent of the value of the land was seen by the very real anger of the starving population of Connemara and their collective refusal to accept ejectment processes which were issued in their hundreds in Carraroe and surrounding areas in January 1880. The Carraroe evictions highlighted a serious conflict between local tenants and those who represented law and order. Ten families from Carraroe emigrated to Graceville under Nugent’s charge. As such it is important to give the evictions greater consideration.

Rents in Carraroe had been unreasonably and unfairly increased and when the crisis of the late 1870s occurred, tenants were unable to pay rents. The majority of landlords in other parts of Ireland had given abatements in response to the situation with the exception of landlords in Mayo and Galway. According to the law of eviction, the process server was required to hand the document containing the court’s decree to the head of the family or to fasten it to the door of the dwelling. Little resistance was traditionally met. According to Davitt, Carraroe was the ‘first successful encounter’ of its kind to prevent the legal proceedings from taking place. The ‘battle of Carraroe’, as it became identified, created great interest in the efforts of the Land League in Ireland and in America. When the process server, John Fenton, attempted to serve notice to a number of tenants he was surrounded by an opposing force of 500 men. A skirmish ensued in which a number of women and children received bayonet wounds. Fenton and the constabulary were driven back to the barracks in Carraroe. It was two days later, when up to 250 policemen had arrived from various districts, that Fenton next attempted what he had previously failed to complete. However, just as the constabulary had sought reinforcements so did the people of Carraroe and 2,000 men travelled from the islands and the mountains to assist. In the end the processes were not

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<sup>110</sup> *The Connaught Telegraph*, 3 January, 1880, p.5

<sup>111</sup> *The Connaught Telegraph*, 3 January, 1880, p.2

served and the constabulary returned to Spiddal. According to Curtis, Dublin Castle's desire not to massacre people rendered the constabulary's firepower useless.<sup>112</sup>

As the war for land rights escalated, the collective action of tenants and Land Leaguers was the most effective weapon. Shopkeepers were prevented from providing provisions to the police.<sup>113</sup> Those who could afford to pay rents were also prevented from doing so while on the opposing side the government found starvation to be their most effective weapon. The *Weekly Dispatch* stated Lord Beaconsfield who had returned from successful military campaigns against the Zulu and the Afghans was to tame the wild Irish but according to *The Nation*, 'his weapon this time is famine'.<sup>114</sup> By March 1880 the determination of tenants not to be removed from their properties held strong. A process server on the estates of Reverend Livingstone and Reverend Carroll at Kilmaclusser near Westport was met by a thousand men and women and he failed in his duty to evict tenants in arrears.<sup>115</sup> In May 1880 notices were posted in Mayo threatening the life of anyone who took a farm from an evicted tenant.<sup>116</sup> As the distress continued in June 1880 a serious disturbance took place involving people resisting evictions at Roundstone while a further anti-eviction demonstration took place in Swinford.<sup>117</sup>

The mass mobilisation of the electorate provided success for the Irish Parliamentary Party in the elections of June 1880. Throughout the period of disturbances, constabulary returns indicated 463 families were evicted in 1877, this increased to 1,238 in 1879 and further to 2,110 in 1880.<sup>118</sup> The land movement which began in earnest in Mayo in 1879 became more resolute in 1880 as the crisis continued and as such further consideration must be given to this watershed movement.

## Famine Response

Despite the calls for relief little assistance was forthcoming from the government. It was the Duchess of Marlborough who played a significant role in awakening the British

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<sup>112</sup> Davitt, M., *The Fall of Feudalism in Ireland*, (London, 1904), pp 211-19; L. Perry Curtis Jr. *The Depiction of Eviction in Ireland 1845-1910*, (Dublin, 2011), pp 102-103; *Report of the Commission of Inquiry into the Working of the Landlord and Tenant [Ireland] Act, 1870 and the Amending Acts, with evidence, Appendices and Index* [hereafter cited as Bessborough Commission]: House of Commons 1881 [c 2779] xviii, p.652, *The Nation*, 10 January, 1880, p.12

<sup>113</sup> *The Nation*, 10 January, 1880, p.12

<sup>114</sup> *The Nation*, 17 January, 1880, p.6

<sup>115</sup> *The Nation*, 13 March, 1880, p.1

<sup>116</sup> *The Nation*, 29 May, 1880, p.13

<sup>117</sup> *The Nation*, 19 June, 1880, pp 1, 2

<sup>118</sup> *The Times*, 3 August, 1880, p.6

public to the Irish situation with a passionate and urgent appeal in a letter to the *Times* on 16 December 1879 but even before the Duchess declared charity to be the most important requirement in the situation, donations had begun to arrive from countries outside of Ireland and England.<sup>119</sup> Following the Duchess of Marlborough's appeal, the Lord Mayor of Dublin established the Mansion House Committee in December 1879 and by January 1880 the relief committee began sifting through appeals and collating returns from the distressed districts.<sup>120</sup>

Although the Duchess of Marlborough's efforts were supported by many noted public figures not all admired her approach. Charles Stewart Parnell M.P. denounced the Marlborough Relief Fund and the Mansion House relief organisation because, he asserted, no relief from these funds was to be given to people who had not paid their rent and were in default. In essence the most desperate were not to be relieved.<sup>121</sup> In a letter to American newspapers in February 1880, Parnell called for support for the Land League and stated the Duchess and her husband, the Chief Secretary of Ireland, could not be separated. According to Parnell, on the one hand charity was being offered while on the other the Duchess's husband engaged in sending soldiers to bayonet the women and children 'he pretends to relieve'. He further claimed that donations from America to the Duchess's charity were used 'as a political engine to assist the landlords in driving people from their homes'.<sup>122</sup>

Parnell and John Dillon of the Land League movement travelled to the United States in January of 1880 where tens of thousands of Irish men and women turned out to cheer and listen to them in cities such as New York and Philadelphia.<sup>123</sup> By the third week of Parnell and Dillon's travels throughout the U.S., it was estimated that \$450,000 had been donated to the Land League for the relief of the Irish.<sup>124</sup> The press estimated that from 26 January to 30 January approximately 250,000 people had turned out to hear the Land League speakers. It was further estimated that a quarter of a million dollars had been collected by the end of January.<sup>125</sup> On 2 February 1880, Parnell was received at a special sitting by the House of Representatives at Washington and the following day he met with the U.S. President along

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<sup>119</sup> Early in December the Comte de Paris sent £10 to Connemara, the Bishop of Detroit on behalf of his congregation sent £824 to the Archbishop of Cashel who began to receive donations from many places in the U.S. including £200 sent from the diocese of Cleveland in Ohio. £1,000 was sent to the Bishop of Galway from the Archdiocese of Westminster. *Times*, 16 December, 1879. Proceedings of the Dublin Mansion House Relief Committee 1880, (Browne and Nolan, 1881), pp 12-13; *The Nation*, 3 January, 1880, p.1;

<sup>120</sup> *The Irish Times*, 5 January, 1880.

<sup>121</sup> *The Nation*, 31 January, 1880, p.4

<sup>122</sup> *The Nation*, 28 February, 1880, p.4

<sup>123</sup> *The Nation*, 17 January, 1880, p.1

<sup>124</sup> *The Nation*, 24 January, 1880, p.4

<sup>125</sup> *The Nation*, 31 January, 1880, p.4

with his full cabinet.<sup>126</sup> Parnell described those responsible for the establishment of the Mansion House Committee as ‘flunkeys, Castle hacks, and men belonging to the narrowest landlord interest’.<sup>127</sup> The situation was succinctly put by a contributor to *The Nation*, who argued that when tenants had to seek assistance from the landlord class it placed landlords in a very powerful position of exerting influence over tenants and similarly when desperate tenants sought and obtained assistance from the Land League this enhanced the chances of this organisation ultimately achieving its aims.<sup>128</sup> By early March, American funding had increased to \$880,000.<sup>129</sup> Just as Parnell was critical of the Duchess of Marlborough fund, there were members of parliament who criticised Parnell and his U.S. fundraising efforts. F.H. O’Donnell, M.P. for Dungarvan in Waterford believed the money raised in America was used for the upkeep of the Land League’s ‘ignorant puppets’ in parliament.<sup>130</sup>

### **Relief unable to alleviate distress**

Newspapers and journals responded to the distress in Ireland and contributed greatly by raising awareness throughout the world. A special correspondent of the *Daily Telegraph* wrote from Connemara on 12 January 1880, that ‘the question is one of famine impending, but here the grisly spectre has arrived, and stalks abroad though the country seeking its victims. Proofs of this are unhappily forthcoming in any number’.<sup>131</sup> Further in January, many English and European publications responded to the distress in Ireland by calling for various actions to be undertaken.<sup>132</sup> The American press held great sympathy for the Irish which was due to the huge swells of first and second generation Irish people who colonised its regions and cities. Parnell and Dillon highlighted the plight of the tenant farmers and advocated a system a shared ownership of land in Ireland.<sup>133</sup> The *Philadelphia Times* was of the opinion that English rule ‘has made the Emerald isle a waste of poverty and its people worse than slaves’.<sup>134</sup> Newspapers from Glasgow to Rochester in the U.S. voiced strong condemnation of the land system and advocated the right of farmers and labourers to own the land they worked.<sup>135</sup>

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<sup>126</sup> *The Nation*, 7 February, 1880, p.1

<sup>127</sup> *The Nation*, 7 February, 1880, p.5

<sup>128</sup> *The Nation*, 6 March, 1880, p.10

<sup>129</sup> *The Nation*, 13 March, 1880, p.5

<sup>130</sup> Áine Ní Chongáile, *F.H. O’Donnell 1848 -1916: A Shaol agus a Shaothar*, M.A. thesis, (UCG, 1985), p.57

<sup>131</sup> *Proceedings of the Mansion House Relief Committee*, 1880 (Dublin, 1881), p.37

<sup>132</sup> *The Connaught Telegraph*, 17 January, 1880, p.2; *The Nation*, 17 January, 1880, p.1

<sup>133</sup> *The Nation*, 3 January, 1880, p.4

<sup>134</sup> *The Nation*, 3 January, 1880, p.4

<sup>135</sup> *The Nation*, 3 January, 1880, p.4

Although the newspapers played a vital role by bringing the disaster to the attention of the public the very real responsibility of saving lives remained with the charitable organisations. By January 1880, 250 families in Letterfrack were reported to be in destitution and debt. In Carna, 500 families were reported as not having had food for a fortnight while the Sisters of Mercy had clothed 100 naked children attending their schools.<sup>136</sup> Father Patrick Grealy who would accompany the families Nugent assisted from Carna wrote to the *The Nation* in January 1880 outlining the difficulties facing the people of Carna and Recess. The workhouse was 20-33 miles from the parish while the relieving officer was 16-26 miles away which meant that relief under the poor law system was a ‘mockery’ in the locality. Grealy rhetorically asked how was a mother expected to travel anything from 32 to 60 miles with no guarantee of food for her children after reaching her destination. Carna and Recess had no Board of Guardians, no town commissioners, no corporate board and no public body of any sort to provide employment or ‘raise a sympathetic voice on behalf of a naked and starving population’.<sup>137</sup>

On February 23 1880, Fr Stephens of the relief committee of Aughagower, in Mayo wrote to the Mansion House highlighting the urgent need in his area. He further argued that not all of those in need of relief were treated equally and that sums of money were given to the different denominations regardless of their congregations’ size or need. Stephens later would accompany five families from Aughagower to Galway from where they would be assisted by Nugent to emigrate.<sup>138</sup> Stephens claimed that Catholics were being converted by food and clothing. The practice of conversion identified as ‘souperism’ was alleged to have been carried out by the Revd M. Clesham who provided assistance to those who attended his ‘jumper’ school. Stephens’s concerns regarding Clesham are further reviewed in Chapter 3 of this study. Moreover, a fuller discussion of the conditions which led to religious controversy which took place in the late 1870s is discussed later in this chapter.

The correspondence to the Mansion House provided further information regarding the emigrant families who were chosen to leave by Nugent. The emigrants who travelled to Minnesota had among them ten families from Carna. Letters from Carna in March 1880 highlight Father Grealy’s efforts to secure the people of Carna. Grealy felt the local relief committee had to be dissolved if not supported more adequately. ‘We cannot endure much

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<sup>136</sup> J. P. Murray, ‘A Lesser Known Famine Crisis in Galway 1879/80’, *Journal of the Galway Family History Society* IV, (1996), pp 93-94. *The Connaught Telegraph*, 3 January, 1880, p.5

<sup>137</sup> *The Nation*, 10 January, 1880, p.11

<sup>138</sup> J. E. Stephens to the Mansion House Relief Fund, 23 February 1880, (D.C.A., Mansion House relief fund, 67, Aughagower). See appendix for Stephens’s letter to Mansion House Relief Fund

longer the crowds of clamouring men, women and children who daily besiege our houses and the pain it causes us to have to let them home hungry'. It would appear that the situation had crossed the precipice into crisis and that fever was prevalent. Grealy stated on 20 March that food was desperately needed and was more important than seed. 'That seed was useless to people who were fainting from hunger and unable to work'. With regard to seed potatoes he claimed they were taken by a crowd of hungry protestors who roasted them on a large fire built upon the Quay. Resigned to the plight of the poorest, Grealy predicted that many would die within a short period.

Coincidentally, Grealy also complained of unfair treatment just as Father Stephens of Aughagower had. It was Grealy's contention that the island communities were in receipt of more aid than others and that some remotest districts such as Loughnoise at the north end of Kilkerrin bay where 60 families lived were forgotten about. The population of Carna was 5,000 and was, according to Grealy, the most destitute and populated parish with the exception of the Clifden parish but it did not receive 'half the amount of relief as even the smallest and best off'. According to Grealy, every other parish had

'people of influence to raise a sympathetic voice in its behalf ... every other parish is visited by strangers of every creed, class and nationality. But not one here but the priest and so much out of the way and so little attraction that not a stranger or person of wealth ever sets a foot in it'.<sup>139</sup>

While Stephens complained about the actions of Nugent's representative in Aughagower, Grealy complained of the absence of Nugent representatives in his district and of feeling excluded.

### **The Clamour to Sustain the West until Harvest**

The prolonged agricultural crisis which began in 1877 continued to worsen in 1879. By March 1880 there was no county in Ireland in which there were not at least two local relief committees receiving grants from the Mansion House fund. In many cases in Connacht, unions were unable to provide the several thousand pounds per week which was required to ease the distress, as burdening ratepayers with such debt could only have resulted in collective financial ruin. Months passed with the Mansion House committee attempting to encourage unions to meet their obligations and during this time the fear of the Mansion

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<sup>139</sup> Mazell, Kearney and Grealy to Mansion House Relief Fund, 11, 16, 20 March 1880, (D.C.A., The Mansion House relief fund, ch 1/158/ 325, Carna). See appendix for letters from P. Grealy to Mansion House Committee.



House withdrawing its support sent terror to the hearts of those trying to hold communities together. From Clifden a telegram stated ‘do not abandon us. If help is withheld for a week, hundreds will die’.<sup>140</sup> In the spring of 1880 a half a million pounds worth of new seeds was distributed throughout the country. This effort of policy-makers may have been more appeasement than any genuine effort to alleviate poverty as an amendment to the Seeds Bill to allow Guardians advance monies to supply artificial manure was rejected by Parliament.<sup>141</sup> By late spring the distress grew while the funds of the Mansion House Committee began to dwindle.

With little work available by the beginning of summer, thousands remained dependent on the Mansion House Committee for Indian meal to keep them alive. The Duchess of Marlborough Committee had begun by this stage to wind down its efforts which was seen by contributors as a sign that the distress had abated. Public work schemes were effective in certain districts but in Mayo in more than half of the districts relieved by the Mansion House committee no public works had begun.<sup>142</sup> On 5 July 1880 the local committee Chairman, Fr Stephens from Aughagower, claimed the relief works were a sham as they were given to professional contractors. ‘They are of little or no use to the poor. The contractors and their friends alone profit by them’.<sup>143</sup> Mr Fox was further of the opinion that the entire system of baronial works along with the system of out-door relief was an ‘organised burlesque’.<sup>144</sup> It was Fox’s opinion that the actual works undertaken in nine districts of Mayo and Galway and the relief value they provided was ‘wholly illusory and without foundation’.<sup>145</sup>

In May 1880, an American reporter at a lecture presented by the *Boston Pilot* stated that of a population of 911,339 in Connacht, 421,500 were in extreme distress.<sup>146</sup> By this time famine fever had taken hold in a dozen places scattered throughout Mayo and Galway according to the Mansion House Committee.<sup>147</sup> Disease was now setting in fast in the west as a diet of Indian meal prepared with no milk and often not fully cooked for lack of fuel along with fewer charitable funds resulted in famine sickness. By late June *The Nation* reported famine fever as raging in the Swinford Union. Grealy continued to appeal from Galway: ‘in

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<sup>140</sup> *Proceedings of the Mansion House Relief Committee*, 1880 (Dublin, 1881), pp 44-47

<sup>141</sup> *The Nation*, 21 February, 1880, p.12

<sup>142</sup> *Proceedings of the Mansion House Relief Committee*, 1880 (Dublin, 1881), pp. 57-59

<sup>143</sup> *Proceedings of the Mansion House Relief Committee*, 1880. Letters from Distressed Districts (Dublin, 1881), p. 259

<sup>144</sup> Fox, J.A., *Reports on the conditions of the peasantry of the county of Mayo during the famine of 1880. Appendix Report on the subject of the Baronial Relief Works, submitted at the usual Meeting of the Committee, held on the 12<sup>th</sup> of June, 1880.* (Dublin 1880) pp 43-45. *The Nation*, 19 June, 1880, p.3

<sup>145</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>146</sup> *The Nation*, 29 May, 1880, p.7

<sup>147</sup> *Proceedings of the Mansion House Relief Committee*, 1880 (Dublin, 1881), pp 60-62

my missionary travels I found people living on seaweed and common herbs mixed with Indian-meal, and not half enough of this'.<sup>148</sup> In response to the many reports of famine fever the Mansion House committee requested Dr George Sigerson to conduct an inquiry into the medical condition of the people living in the west of Ireland. Sigerson was born in 1836; he was a physician, biologist, poet and author. He was influenced by a number of Young Irishmen, spoke Irish and was active in literary circles. During the 1860s Sigerson wrote a number of political articles but failed to obtain a hospital appointment. However from 1865 he was attached to the Catholic University medical school.<sup>149</sup> In his final report in August 1880 he stated it was an error to assume that famine fever alone was the consequence of the distress and that typhus, typhoid and relapsing fevers immediately follow any period of privation, and 'therefore the aim of any medical inquiry should be to ascertain not so much the presence of a particular fever-form as the circumstances under which it arose'.<sup>150</sup>

The reasons why famine had such an adverse affect on the furthest regions of Connemara and south Mayo must be examined. The distinctiveness of these regions separated them from other areas where depopulation had occurred in the decades following the Famine. Demographic changes that occurred throughout Ireland did not take place at the same pace in the decades following the famine in the far west of Connemara and south Mayo.

## **Society in the far west of Connacht**

By the 1870s and early 1880s there were areas of Connacht which continued to exhibit pre-famine patterns not seen in the rest of Ireland. In the absence of remittance money some communities depended upon incomes from seasonal migration. In 1879 when the potato crop failed and income from seasonal migration ceased, the west of Ireland suffered to a greater extent than any other region. Within Connemara there were differences in how communities lived but most shared a common trait which was their abject poverty. Coastal communities depended greatly on the surrounding sea as the land offered little by being too rocky to cultivate easily. The inland regions contained some good lands for cultivating but overall much of inland Connemara was made up of mountainous regions surrounded by bog. Nugent's emigrants came from both coastal and inland regions.<sup>151</sup>

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<sup>148</sup> *The Nation*, 26 June, 1880, p.5

<sup>149</sup> J.B. Lyons, 'Sigerson, George', *Dictionary of Irish Biography* (ed.) James McGuire, James Quinn, (Cambridge University Press, 2009)

<sup>150</sup> *Districts of Oranmore, Athenry, and Derrybrien. Sixth Report of Dr. Sigerson* (Dublin, 1880) p.155

<sup>151</sup> The land of the Westport union was described as primarily mountainous land with a great deal of bog in the north where Aughagower is located. In 1893 the first report of the Congested Districts Board (CDB) aptly

The second half the nineteenth century saw variations in the way people of the west of Ireland lived. The most revealing account of life in Connemara is to be found in T.A. Finlay and C.R. Browne's writings along with the reports of the Congested Districts Board (CDB). Thomas A. Finlay S.J. was a Catholic priest, an economist and philosopher who was educated in Germany where he became influenced by continental farming practices and the practice of cooperative farming. C.R. Browne was an anthropologist who undertook ethnographic studies of people of the west of Ireland in the late nineteenth century.<sup>152</sup> Brown along with A.C. Haddon conducted research which included detailed measurements of the population while their writings described how people lived in the latter decades of the nineteenth century.<sup>153</sup> The Congested District Board was established by a Land Purchase Act in 1891 in an effort to alleviate poverty in the west of Ireland. The original congested districts made up about one-sixth of the land and one-ninth of the people in Ireland. The CDB had wide powers and its first step was to amass data on the conditions of the people in the area under its purview which resulted in the *Baseline Reports*. The board provided the capital and expertise necessary to encourage fisheries in the west of Ireland along with encouraging rural industries and the redistribution and consolidation of farm holdings. They also tried to improve the quality of livestock and seeds used by farmers by introducing superior breeding

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separated the two types of communities which lived in Connemara in the nineteenth century. Communities along the seashore had many advantages from fishing and gathering seaweed along with cheap carriage by sea but faced hardships in procuring fuel and raising cattle. Inland dwellers depended upon their small holdings the rent for which was paid by earnings derived by migrating to England and Scotland for a number of months each year. *First Annual Report of the Congested Districts Board for Ireland*, H.C. 1893-94, (C 6908), p.8; *Royal Commission on Labour. The Agricultural Labourer*, H.C. 1893 (C 6894)XXI, p.55

<sup>152</sup> Browne, C.R., 'The Ethnography of Inishbofin and Inishshark, County Galway', *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy*, 3, 1893; 'The Ethnography of the Mullet, Inishkea Islands, and Portacloy, County Mayo', *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy*, 3, 1895; 'The Ethnography of Ballycroy, County Mayo', *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy*, 4, 1896; 'The Ethnography of Clare Island and Inishturk, Co. Mayo', *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy*, 5, 1897; 'The Ethnography of Garumna and Lettermullen, in the County of Galway', *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy*, 5, 1898; 'The Ethnography of Carna and Mweenish, in the Parish of Moyruss, Connemara', *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy*, 6, 1900; Browne, C.R., and A.C., Haddon, 'The Ethnography of the Aran Islands, County Galway', *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy*, Vol. 2, (1891-1893); Abstract of lecture on The Aran Islands, a study in Irish Ethnography, *Annual Report and Proceedings of the Belfast Naturalists' Field Club*, Ser. II, Vol. III, pt. VI, 1893; Finlay, T.A. 'The Economics of Carna', *The New Ireland Review*, Vol. IX, April 1898; Peasant Economics, *The New Ireland Review*, Vol. XVIII, November 1902;

<sup>153</sup> Buxton, Sydney, 'Mr Tuke and his Work' in *Contemporary Review* (1896), p.877; Tuke called for the establishment of the CDB which were introduced under the Irish Land Bill of 1891. The CDB had the powers of a government department and held responsibility for encouraging and overseeing emigration, consolidating holdings, the development of the fishing industry and public engineering works. The CDB further attempted to improve the breed of livestock, provide seed potatoes and other cereals.

stock and distributing new seeds. The CDB reports have provided an important insight into the poverty of the west of Ireland.<sup>154</sup>

Although poverty did decline in post-famine Connemara, it did so at a much slower rate than the rest of the country. According to Grimshaw, the conditions of the homes in which people lived were an important measure of the social condition of a community.<sup>155</sup> In 1841, third and fourth-class houses comprised 90 per cent of all homes in Connacht. By 1881 this number had fallen to 68 per cent due to a combination of legislation, depopulation and town planning.<sup>156</sup> However, regardless of improvement efforts, by the 1890s the poorest class of house survived in the most western regions of Mayo and Galway. The dwellings of Carna were built from rough stone, without mortar, and thatched with straw or some 'weedy' substitute. The single room dwelling was, 'at once, dwelling, barn, cowhouse, and piggery'. At one end of the room the family resided while at the other end the farm livestock was kept, which was rarely more than one animal.<sup>157</sup> The CDB report for south Connemara offered a similar description of housing conditions: the fireplace was situated against one end wall and after dark the family and friends sat round the fire with cow, heifer, calf and pig getting as near to it as they could. 'The customs of daily life are simple and natural: and the sense and manner of the dwellers in these rude homes are such that one cannot enter or quit one of them without paying a mental tribute of respect to its owner'.<sup>158</sup> Beds were a rare luxury and straw beds were substituted with the clothes worn in the day kept on at night. Guano sacks were used to keep the inhabitants warm.<sup>159</sup>

Women's work in the home began early, the fire had to be lit to boil the animal feed; often the woman of the house would have to get up in the night to remove one saucepan of potatoes needed to feed pigs, and replace it with another. Although women worked wherever needed on the farm, looking after milk, eggs, butter and caring for farmyard animals were their primary tasks along with cooking and cleaning the home and taking care of the young and the elderly.<sup>160</sup> Women's work was not solely confined to the home; they also undertook all kinds of farm work. They carried loads on their backs and on their heads, they saved hay,

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<sup>154</sup> *The Times*, 15 January 1896; Breathnach Ciara, *The Congested Districts Board of Ireland, 1891-1923: Poverty and Development in the West of Ireland* (Dublin, 2005), p.21; Guinnane, *The Vanishing Irish, Households, Migration, and the Rural Economy in Ireland*, p.66

<sup>155</sup> Grimshaw, T.W., *Facts and Figures about Ireland*. (Dublin, 1893), p.16

<sup>156</sup> Clark, Samuel, *Social Origins of the Irish Land War*. (New Jersey 1979), p.139-143; Royal Commission on Labour. *The Agricultural Labourer* H.C. 1893(C 6894-XXI), p.62; Clear, Caitriona, *Social Change and Everyday Life in Ireland, 1850-1922* (Manchester, 2007), p.142

<sup>157</sup> Finlay, T.A., 'The Economics of Carna', p.67

<sup>158</sup> Congested Districts Board, District of South Connemara p.483

<sup>159</sup> Browne, *Ethnography of Carna and Mweenish, Connemara*, pp 523-525

<sup>160</sup> Clear, *Social Change and Everyday Life in Ireland, 1850-1922* (Manchester, 2007), p.11

bound corn, planted and picked potatoes, pitched sheaves, stacked corn, footed and drew out turf, drew seaweed and kelp from the shore to dry land, pounded furze for animal feed, picked mussels, baited lines, gutted fish and spun hemp for the fishing nets.<sup>161</sup> In the districts of Garumna and Lettermullen manure for the land called ‘black weed’ was carried by women from the seashore.<sup>162</sup> Women were also involved in producing goods in their own homes for sale at local markets or to regional merchants. Raising poultry was further an important source of income for rural women.<sup>163</sup>

Along with hardship in the home, the climate and environment in which people lived offered further challenges. The sea-facing districts of south Connemara, Carna, Clifden and Letterfrack held land too rocky to cultivate with anything other than the spade. Livestock struggled to survive in such harsh environs and farmyard manure was of such poor quality that seaweed was the fertiliser of choice. Potatoes, oats, turnips and mangolds were the crops produced. Finlay states the cattle of Carna were gaunt and hungry-looking, with ‘skins tightly stretched on their bones, heads seem much too large for the bodies to which they are attached, and horns out of all proportion with the rest of the skeleton’. Hunger forced the cattle to feed on the seaweed that was used to manure the potatoes. There was a high mortality rate of cattle: ‘the disease to which these deaths are set down – “hardship” – is always rife, and its yearly average of victims always high’.<sup>164</sup> Cash incomes in Carna were primarily derived from kelp-burning.<sup>165</sup> Of further importance to the economic welfare of the west was the fishing industry of Connemara and the coastal districts.<sup>166</sup> Markets did exist for fish, but income from migratory labour and fertiliser production may have been more consistent and as such fishing may only have been considered for income purposes when sea conditions were not hazardous.<sup>167</sup> Incomes were further enhanced by raising chickens and by the sale of the eggs they produced.<sup>168</sup> From 1850 to 1914 there were substantial changes to the relative prices paid for agricultural output. Agricultural wages increased and the agricultural economy moved away from crops and toward livestock. As Ireland became depopulated, labour became scarce in the countryside. Wage increases were the force behind

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<sup>161</sup> O’Dowd, Anne, ‘Women in Rural Ireland in the nineteenth century: how the daughters, wives and sisters of small farmers and landless labourers fared’ in *The Irish Women’s History Reader* (London, 2001), p.209

<sup>162</sup> Browne, *The Ethnography of Garumna and Lettermullen*, p.249

<sup>163</sup> Guinnane, *The Vanishing Irish, Households, Migration, and the Rural Economy in Ireland*, p.54

<sup>164</sup> T.A. Finlay, ‘The Economics of Carna’, p.68

<sup>165</sup> T.A. Finlay, ‘The Economics of Carna’, pp 68-70

<sup>166</sup> Congested Districts Board: Baseline Reports, District of Carna

<sup>167</sup> Congested Districts Board: Baseline Reports, District of Clifden

<sup>168</sup> Congested Districts Board: Baseline Reports, District of Carna

the move from tillage up to 1876.<sup>169</sup> Lee points out that commercial farming had superseded subsistence agriculture over three-quarters of the country by 1850: Ireland was one of the most commercially advanced agricultures in the world. According to Lee the farmer behaved as a 'rational economic man', as once famine evictions had ended, it was he who drove the labourers and his children off the land.<sup>170</sup>

### **Post-Famine Demographics and Connemara's Exceptionalism**

The decline of marriage seen in post-Famine Ireland was not unique to that country; many European countries had very high numbers of unmarried adults at the turn of the twentieth century. Guinnane outlines the alternatives to marriage which counter the Malthusian models to historical demography. Marriage and celibacy were strongly related to the social and economic environment in which young Irish people found themselves. Institutions such as 'the arranged match' or the Poor Law along with the organisation of labour markets were not just important to demographic decision making, they were 'the products of historical individuals and their efforts to grapple with the exigencies of their own lives'.<sup>171</sup> The development of institutions meant marriage and children were no longer the sole resource to protect against the vulnerabilities of old age. The nature of landholding in Ireland further reflected every demographic decision where household changes brought about changes in the traditional family. Single male households and households where siblings remained living together unmarried became more common. The decisions taken by one generation became more acceptable to the next. As more people decided not to marry, it became an accepted norm. Other people's children became substitute heirs. Labourers were no less likely to marry than farmers but the wealthiest farmers were often less likely to marry than were their poorest neighbours. The use of land to secure a surrogate heir enabled the wealthiest to contract for services that others could only obtain by procreating children.<sup>172</sup>

Marriage arrangements in post famine Ireland gave priority to economic considerations with control exercised by property-holding parents over their children and were often the result of a carefully negotiated bargain. Demographic change centred on a household system that in some instances, limited marriage to a single favoured son or daughter in each generation. The importance of maintaining a family name on land had implications for

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<sup>169</sup> Guinnane, *The Vanishing Irish, Households, Migration, and the Rural Economy in Ireland*, p.40

<sup>170</sup> Joseph Lee, *The Modernisation of Irish Society 1848-1918* (Dublin, 1973), p.10

<sup>171</sup> Guinnane, *The Vanishing Irish, Households, Migration, and the Rural Economy in Ireland*, pp 28, 225, 286

<sup>172</sup> Guinnane, *The Vanishing Irish, Households, Migration, and the Rural Economy in Ireland*, pp 22, 28, 203, 208, 231-2, 275-6, 284

household succession too which resulted in agreements favourable to ageing parents and their successors. Primogeniture or fixed rules were not practical as they could reduce a parent's bargaining power. A written agreement stipulated obligations the inheriting son had to his parents and siblings by inheriting the farm. The dowry's real purpose was to secure non-inheriting siblings. Irish families found the post-famine economic order offered new ways to manage the process of transferring property and getting the young started in their own adult lives. As land became increasingly unavailable for sub-division, men and women were forced to emigrate.<sup>173</sup>

Emigration had a profound effect on marriage, household formation and marital fertility. Emigrants left to join thriving communities outside of Ireland while remittances ensured a continued flow to these new communities. Females from non farming households emigrated earlier than females from wealthier families and males from poor farming backgrounds.<sup>174</sup> Changes in the alternatives available to women reduced the attraction of marriage. The rising emigrant rates for Irish women reflected women's ability to reject what Irish life held for them. The differences between the implications of marriage for men and marriage for women in Ireland suggest Irish women were central to the institution's decline during the nineteenth century. According to Guinnane, as most women were free to choose to emigrate, this placed them in a stronger position regarding their Match and also within their marriages.<sup>175</sup>

The demographic changes that took place throughout post-Famine Ireland did not occur at the same pace throughout the island. According to Cousens, a pre-famine demographic pattern had survived in the 1850s and in the subsequent decades where 'the areas of increasing population, the towns apart, were concentrated almost entirely in the west of Ireland'.<sup>176</sup> According to Guinnane, the Famine's long-run impact on numbers came not through its direct impact on population but through its impact on the social and economic organisation of the country.<sup>177</sup> The close correlation between pressure of population and dramatic decline in population cannot be seen in Connemara until the late 1870s and early 1880s when the agricultural crisis forced mass movement and changes in the patterns of

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<sup>173</sup> Clear, *Social change and everyday life in Ireland, 1850-1922* (Manchester, 2007), pp 77-78; Guinnane, *The Vanishing Irish, Households, Migration, and the Rural Economy in Ireland*, pp 134, 146-50, 152-4, 157, 165

<sup>174</sup> Guinnane, *The Vanishing Irish, Households, Migration, and the Rural Economy in Ireland*, p 188

<sup>175</sup> Guinnane, *The Vanishing Irish, Households, Migration, and the Rural Economy in Ireland*, pp 236-7

<sup>176</sup> Cousens S.H. The Regional Variations in Population Changes in Ireland, 1861-1881. *Economic History Review*: 17(1964) pp 310-311

<sup>177</sup> Guinnane, *The Vanishing Irish, Households, Migration, and the Rural Economy in Ireland*, p.88

natural increase.<sup>178</sup> Post-famine Ireland witnessed a demographic development which included a changing rural class structure, increased age of marriage, declining marriage rates, declining birth rates, a static death rate, and emigration.<sup>179</sup> The difference between the rate of population decline in the west of Ireland and elsewhere in Ireland was due to the high rate of natural increase in the west. Marriages in post-famine Ireland occurred later while the number of marriages had greatly reduced. Marriage was a 'microcosm of the singular society which developed in Ireland after the famine', with the traditional marriage becoming a 'minority experience'. The second half of the nineteenth century was marked by a steady increase in celibacy.<sup>180</sup> The average age of men marrying between 1845 and 1914 rose from about 25 to 33 while the average age of females rose from about 21 to 28. The increase of those not marrying aged 45-54 increased from 12 per cent in 1851 to 26 per cent in 1911.<sup>181</sup>

In Connemara the marriage rate differed little from the marriage rate of pre-famine Ireland. From 1871 to 1881 the rate of natural increase in population was highest in areas along the western seaboard in south Connemara and inland regions of Mayo. During the 1860s and 1870s the regional variations in celibacy led to differences in natural increase: 25 to 33 per cent of women remained unmarried in Ulster and Leinster, by comparison 10 to 15 per cent remained unmarried in Connacht.<sup>182</sup> In the regions along the south and west coast of Connemara where population continued to increase, marriage rates varied the least. According to Browne, marriages in Connemara at the end of the nineteenth century were not marriages of romance. Similar to the marriage patterns throughout Ireland, they were arranged. Parental supervision of young men and women ensured sexual encounters did not occur outside of marriage. Young persons of the opposite sex did not even walk together but contrary to patterns which developed all over Ireland, the age of people marrying remained extremely low, suggesting every effort was made to prevent extra marital pregnancy but not marriage.<sup>183</sup>

Irish fertility patterns became most distinctive during the late nineteenth century when fertility dramatically fell in most of western Europe. Reduced fertility reflected changes in

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<sup>178</sup> Cousens S.H. The Regional Variations in Population Changes in Ireland, 1861-1881. *Economic History Review*: 17(1964) pp 301-3

<sup>179</sup> Joseph Lee, *The Modernisation of Irish Society 1848-1918*, pp1-3

<sup>180</sup> David Fitzpatrick, 'Marriage in Post-Famine Ireland' in Art Cosgrove (ed.) *Marriage in Ireland*, (Dublin, 1985), p.116

<sup>181</sup> Joseph Lee, *The Modernisation of Irish Society 1848-1918*, p.3

<sup>182</sup> Cousens S.H., 'The Regional Variations in Population Changes in Ireland, 1861-1881'. *Economic History Review*: 17(1964) p.315

<sup>183</sup> Browne, C.R., 'The Ethnography of Carna and Mweenish, in the parish of Moyrus, Connemara', *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy*, XXVII (1900), p.522



the costs and benefits of having children. As parents earn more, the more expensive their children become and when income is earned through the labour market, parents in turn have fewer children. According to Guinnane, high-fertility counties such as Sligo, Mayo and Galway were unusual by European standards. Women who lived in towns with greater opportunity for employment had fewer children. Developments in the Irish economy had the effect of reducing income-earning chances for rural women. These changes lowered the cost of child rearing in rural Ireland, removing the incentive to have smaller families. As greater emphasis was placed on the intergenerational transfer of property, extra-marital sexual relations were rare in Ireland, and in rural areas it was more likely that sexual transgressions would be detected. The Catholic Church's teachings on sex outside the marriage fitted neatly with the peasant's economic interests.<sup>184</sup> Communities of the far west of Connemara and south Mayo continued to earn income by the same methods that had existed before the Famine. Fertility rates remained high as the changes that were taking place in Ireland and in Europe were not realised in the far west until the latter decades of the nineteenth century.

### **The Importance of External Seasonal Migration to the far west of Ireland**

Earnings from seasonal labour played a significant role by enabling the poorest to remain on unsustainable holdings in particular in the non-coastal regions of Connemara. In the 1870s the far west remained a potato economy with its people relying upon even smaller holdings than when statistics became first available in 1847. One of the main reasons why the post-famine west of Ireland was not forced to adjust was due in part to the continued availability of income derived from seasonal migration which had remained stable up to at least the late 1860s and early 1870s.<sup>185</sup> According to Clark, seasonal migration was the only way many tenants could pay rent and for many families the monies earned from seasonal work in England and Scotland represented one quarter to one third of a family's total income. Seasonal migration constituted an essential part of the economy of Connacht.<sup>186</sup> In 1841 the total number of migrants to England was 57,651 with the highest rates of migration being from the western counties.<sup>187</sup> Based on the locations where Nugent's immigrants departed from it was probable that some families engaged in seasonal migratory labour. As some

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<sup>184</sup> Guinnane, *The Vanishing Irish, Households, Migration, and the Rural Economy in Ireland*, pp 243, 246-7, 249, 260-7

<sup>185</sup> Ó Grada, C., 'Seasonal Migration and Post-Famine Adjustment in the West of Ireland', in *Studia Hibernica*, 13 (1973) pp 48, 52

<sup>186</sup> Clark, Samuel, *Social Origins of the Irish Land War* (New Jersey 1979), pp 139-43

<sup>187</sup> *Agricultural Statistics Ireland 1880. Reports and Tables Relating to Migratory Agricultural Labourers for the year 1880*, H.C. 1881 (C.2809), xciii, p.2

immigrants remained in Graceville while others left, it is important to investigate any correlation between families accustomed to seasonal migration and a successful colonisation. The consequences of seasonal migration included adaptability and an engagement with foreign cultures.

The origins of harvest migration from Ireland are obscure but examples can be dated to the 1740s when Middlesex farmers employed Irish labourers from spring to autumn.<sup>188</sup> By the 1830s, the introduction of a new Poor Law warranted a new relationship between the large farmer and the day labourer in England.<sup>189</sup> Growing unemployment in Ireland and a rapid increase in population from the late eighteenth century forced the Irish labourers to look to large farms in England as the means to raise their income. The evidence of an inquiry in 1835 indicated a greater proportion of migrant workers and vagrants came from Connacht with the numbers from Mayo far surpassing all other counties.<sup>190</sup>

There was relatively little seasonal migration to England or Scotland from the Irish-speaking parts of south Connemara. The reports of the Congested Districts Board of the 1890s indicated very little or no local employment existed for labourers in Clifden and Carna. In the mid nineteenth century the word *spailpín* identified potato pickers. Connemara *spailpíní* not only picked potatoes in east Galway but they also worked in a variety of jobs including general harvest and haymaking. Squads of potato pickers from Mayo were called *tattie hokers* and consisted of men, women and children. Connemara men from Spiddal to Lettermore and Lettermullen were known as *Connies* or *Cunnies* and were hired by farmers at markets in Galway and Athenry. Connemara men were frequently resented in the areas they worked in by local people and by other migratory workers. The reasons why Connemara migrant workers were so disliked included language and communication difficulty. More importantly, the migrants contributed little to the local economy while at the same time they depressed wages.<sup>191</sup>

A special inquiry was called for in 1880 to examine the circumstances of the Irish agricultural labourer described as 'habitually dependent' on the wages from seasonal migration which were seen as an essential part of their means of subsistence.<sup>192</sup> A

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<sup>188</sup> Johnson, J.H., 'Harvest Migration from Nineteenth-Century Ireland', *Institute of British Geographers*, 41 (1967), p.97

<sup>189</sup> Kerr, B.M., 'Irish Seasonal Migration to Great Britain, 1800-38', *Irish Historical Studies* 3 (1942-3), p.366

<sup>190</sup> O'Dowd, Anne, *Spalpeens and Tattie Hokers, History and Folklore of Irish Migratory Agricultural Worker in Ireland and Britain*, Irish Academic Press, Dublin 1991, p.17

<sup>191</sup> O'Dowd, *Spalpeens and Tattie Hokers, History and Folklore of Irish Migratory Agricultural Worker in Ireland and Britain*, pp 44, 52, 55, 229

<sup>192</sup> *Report and Tables Relating to Migratory Agricultural Labourers in Ireland, 1880. H.C. 1881 (C.2809)*, xciii, p.2

commission set up to examine agricultural labourers described the tradition of the migrants of the Westport union who left on 9 June annually following the Newport Fair which was held on 8 June. Part of the proceeds from the sale of cattle paid for their fares while the remainder paid their debts to local shopkeepers. The Mayo men mostly travelled to Lancashire and Cheshire, others went to Warwickshire while a few went to Northumberland and Yorkshire.<sup>193</sup> One farmer in Warwickshire in 1892 remarked that the men needed to borrow money as soon as they arrived but never left without repaying it.<sup>194</sup> Seasonal migration assisted in keeping communities together in remote areas with the alternative being permanent emigration. A network of support came from travelling together. According to the Bessborough Commission in 1880 the concentration of migrants came from the most agriculturally underdeveloped regions of the country such as Mayo, Donegal, Roscommon and Galway. This illustrates, according to Moran, ‘the interrelationships between migration, poverty and under-employment in these regions’.<sup>195</sup> The number of harvestmen, as they were popularly called, from Dublin in 1841 was 5,625, a rate of 15.1 per 1,000. By 1891 this number had reduced to three persons per 1,000. A similar decrease took place all over Ireland with the exception of those counties with the poorest soil and the least means of subsistence. In Mayo the ratio of seasonal migrants to the population was greater in 1891 than in 1841.<sup>196</sup> The people of Mayo, more than any other county or district of Ireland, provided labour to England at the expense of their families and farms.<sup>197</sup>

By 1891 Mayo continued to have the highest rate of migrant workers in Ireland. Seasonal migrants from Mayo and Donegal were described by Hancock in 1880 as ‘allotment labourers’, unprotected by British poor law and prevented by English and Scottish poor law regulations from residing in Britain permanently. Hancock called for union rating to be extended to the labouring classes of Mayo and Donegal to prevent evictions taking place and their houses being pulled down when rents could not be paid. Poor law policy changed in the late 1860s and 1870s. The 1865 act placed the responsibility of poor unions on wealthy parishes and encouraged ratepayers and guardians to contemplate more seriously how best to

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<sup>193</sup> *Royal Commission on Labour. The agricultural labourer. Vol. IV. Ireland. Part IV.* H.C. 1893-4 [c.6894] xxi, p.60

<sup>194</sup> *Ibid*, p.77

<sup>195</sup> Moran, Gerard, ‘‘A Passage To Britain’’: Seasonal Migration and Social Change in the West of Ireland, 1870-1890’, *Saothar*13, p.24

<sup>196</sup> *Report and Tables Relating to Migratory Agricultural Labourers in Ireland, 1880. H.C. 1881 (C.2809)*, xciii, p.6; Hancock, ‘On the Equal Importance of the Education, Poor-law, Cheap Law for Small holders, and Land Questions, at the Present Crisis’ in *Statistical and Social Inquiry Society of Ireland Journal*, (April, 1880) p.53

<sup>197</sup> *Report and Tables Relating to Migratory Agricultural Labourers in Ireland, 1880. H.C. 1881 (C.2809)*, xciii, p.11

reduce the poor rate.<sup>198</sup> The Bessborough Commission of 1881 questioned whether the poor law was too strict and whether forty thousand men should spend half their working lives in other countries. In the case of distress, the workers became the responsibility of the district where they did not work.<sup>199</sup> The demands for land rights and legal protections which began with the Land League in the 1880s became a national cry; however, it is not surprising that it was the men of Mayo who began this heave. Although the families of Mayo harvesters continued to earn incomes after the famine in the same tradition as they had pre-1840, ultimately, by the turn of the century they too were forced down the path others in Ireland had faced since the 1850s. Emigration rates for Galway from 1851-80 were 41.5 per cent while Mayo lost 31.8 per cent of its population. Compared to other counties on the western coast these figures were low. Kerry and Clare recorded rates of over 60 per cent in the same period.<sup>200</sup>

## Language and Religious Controversy

Many baronies in Mayo were speaking English by 1750 and by the end of the eighteenth century a considerable number of young people were Irish speakers but had shifted to English or had at least become proficient bilinguals. Migration and emigration as well as contact with the local gentry promoted bilingualism. As a result only 2 per cent of the following generation were monoglot speakers of Irish as indicated by the 1861 census.<sup>201</sup> Ó Ciosáin places the decline of the Irish language on the lack of printed materials available in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in the vernacular. When the decline of native languages in Wales, Scotland, Brittany and Ireland was compared, the existence of a reading public and of a popular print culture was the result of decisive interventions by institutional churches or by elements within those churches. These same efforts were responsible for retaining the local vernacular.<sup>202</sup>

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<sup>198</sup> MacKinnon, M., 'English Poor Law Policy and the Crusade Against Out relief', *The Journal of Economic History* Vol. XLVII, 3. (1987), pp.613-620

<sup>199</sup> *Report of the Commission of inquiry into the working of landlord and tenant (Ireland) act 1870; and the amending acts, with evidence, appendices and index* (Bessborough commission), H.C .1881 (c2779), xviii, p.436 q.13076, q.13079

<sup>200</sup> *Emigration Statistics of Ireland, 1880*, H.C. 1881, XCIV.703, pp 4-5

<sup>201</sup> Corrigan, K.P., 'I gcuntas Dé mún Béarla do na leanbháin': eisimirce agus an Ghaeilge so naou aois déag': O'Sullivan P. (ed.) *The Irish World Wide: History, Heritage, Identity Vol. 2 The Irish in the New Communities*. (London, 1992), pp 143-144; <sup>201</sup> Langan-Egan, Maureen, *Galway Women in the Nineteenth Century* (Dublin, 1999), pp 97- 98

<sup>202</sup> Ó Ciosáin, Niall, *The Print Cultures Of The Celtic Languages, 1700-1900*, *Cultural and Social History*, Volume 10, issue 3, pp 361-62

According to Corrigan, Gaelic was a minority language which was overwhelmed by a powerful ‘world language’ English, which was superimposed upon the Irish population.<sup>203</sup> Lee states that, ‘contrary to popular persuasion, the schools did not kill the Irish language. Even before the famine, the country was predominantly English-speaking’. It was the classroom according to Lee that made every effort to rid ‘subversive ancestral influence by inculcating in the pupils a proper reverence for the English connection, and proper deference for their social superiors, defined according to the exquisite English concept of class’.<sup>204</sup> English was the medium of instruction in most schools, long before the national schools, as people wanted their children to speak English to assist them with emigration or for obtaining employment, such as the civil service, the Royal Irish Constabulary or, in the case of girls, teaching and the post office.<sup>205</sup>

A further remarkable feature of the far west of Connemara which also assisted the decline of the Irish language was the proliferation of mission schools which began in the 1840s. Catholic children attended Catholic schools having been instructed to do so by Archbishop MacHale who condemned the system of national schools. This resulted in a failure to avail of state funding to establish schools and in its absence Connemara was filled by a more controversial system of education. In 1841, Church of Ireland schools primarily based in Clifden were successful in attracting students by offering food and clothing to those who attended.<sup>206</sup> The Society for Irish Church Missions to the Roman Catholics was established in 1849 as the famine was ending and took a firm hold throughout Connemara. The work was to take place ‘where ignorance is greatest and the advantages are fewest’. By March 1851 Connemara had twenty-one congregations with 3,892 regular attendants and twenty-nine mission schools attended by 2,858 children.<sup>207</sup>

From the very outset the Irish Church Mission was fiercely resented by the majority of Catholics in Connemara. The conviction of evangelicals compelled them to save Roman Catholics who in their opinion were on a certain road to hell. The method of mission work applied by Alexander Dallas and others was termed ‘controversialism’, which involved a

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<sup>203</sup> Corrigan, ‘I gcuntas Dé múin Béarla do na leanbháin’: eisimirce agus an Ghaeilge so naou aois déag’: in O’Sullivan P. (ed.) *The Irish World Wide: History, Heritage, Identity Vol. 2 The Irish in the New Communities*. (London, 1992), p.144

<sup>204</sup> Lee, *The Modernisation of Irish Society 1848-1918* (Dublin, 1973), p.28

<sup>205</sup> Gearóid Ó Tuathaigh, *I mBéal an Bháis: the Great Famine & the Language Shift in Nineteenth Century Ireland* (Quinnipiac, 2015), pp. 35-40; Langan-Egan, *Galway Women in the Nineteenth Century* (Dublin, 1999), p.99;

<sup>206</sup> Villiers-Tuthill, Kathleen, *A Colony of Strangers The Founding & Early History of Clifden*, (Clifden, Galway 2012), pp 104-105

<sup>207</sup> Moffitt, M., *Soupers and Jumpers The Protestant Missions in Connemara, 1848-1937*, pp. 20, 23

direct condemnation of Catholic doctrines and beliefs in the most insulting language. Many in Connemara saw the Irish Church Missions as another arm of the British state. The rate of conversions directly related to the rate of poverty in the region. While a great number of conversions occurred in the first five years following the famine it was the lessening of extreme famine conditions along with an aggressive counter-missionary Catholic campaign which ultimately reversed the evangelicals' advance. It was further claimed that the proselytising efforts of the mission were assisted by the Protestant dominated Board of Guardians of the Clifden union. According to the archives of the Irish Folklore Commission, the decline of the Irish language was assisted by the mission schools, as children were not allowed to speak Irish in school or at home. No Irish was spoken in the Clifden orphanage which created difficulties for children to return to their communities.<sup>208</sup>

To combat the advance of the Church Missions the Catholic Church used the pulpit and the press to expose their dubious claims of success. The clergy further strengthened the faith of Catholics by introducing parish missions and by forming sodalities and confraternities along with orphanages and charitable organisations such as the St Vincent de Paul Society. Other methods included efforts to win converts back; however, when unsuccessful a more ominous method of social ostracism was applied which was highly effective in the close knit communities of Connemara.<sup>209</sup> Although rioting took place in the early years of the establishment of the Irish Church Mission the following decades saw both communities co-exist in relatively non-contentious circumstances although suspicions remained. However, in 1878 with the collapse of the economy and fears of the return of famine conditions tensions rose as vulnerable people were considered to have been at greater risk of becoming converts. Violent outbreaks occurred in 1879 which resulted in further separating and alienating Catholics from Protestants. While it is difficult to identify what sparked such aggressions towards converts the underlying hostilities were clearly evident. In 1878 the Catholic Church began a counter-missionary campaign which led to incidents of violence against proselytisers.<sup>210</sup> Throughout 1879-80 the 'anti-jumper crusade' took place at the same time that the Land League and its supporters were demanding land rights against a backdrop of famine. The Protestant media frequently equated Land League violence with the anti-

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<sup>208</sup> Moffitt, *Soupers and Jumpers The Protestant Missions in Connemara, 1848-1937*, pp 16, 28-34, 44-45, 193

<sup>209</sup> Moffitt, *Soupers and Jumpers The Protestant Missions in Connemara, 1848-1937*, pp 70-73

<sup>210</sup> Moffitt, *Soupers and Jumpers the Protestant Missions in Connemara 1848-1937*, p.136. In 1877 Revd Ballard and two mission teachers were attacked after a court ordered a child to be returned to the care of the Irish Church Missions. In 1878, a Catholic priest was expelled from a mission school which led to rumours of the priest being 'almost murdered' which sparked sectarian incidents. School houses were damaged and teachers were assaulted.

Protestant lawlessness of Connemara and connected both movements with the Catholic Church.<sup>211</sup> Father Stephens's claim that Nugent's companion provided financial assistance to a school allegedly engaged to converting Catholics could have harmed Nugent's fundraising efforts in Liverpool and as such ensured Stephens had to be taken seriously. Nugent worked with both Protestant and Catholic communities in Liverpool and was not concerned with politics including the politics of the Land League. Denouncing or discrediting the Mansion House Committee afforded no advantage to the poorest who sought to benefit from their fundraising efforts.

The challenges Nugent faced and the difficulties that faced the people of Connemara in the crisis of 1879 will be examined at a later stage along with Nugent's efforts to assist the people there. The contentious issue of proselytising and the resulting Catholic response had ramifications for Nugent and may have been a deciding factor when selecting families to emigrate. Greater detail is provided in Chapter 6 of the riots which took place in south Connemara in 1879. Father Rhatigan who was directly involved in the riots was sent to Graceville in 1896 as the parish priest. With regard to the decline of the Irish language the evangelising efforts of mission schools ensured the very communities who retained a pre-famine existence were unable to avoid the influence of the English language.

## **Conclusion**

In 1880 when James Nugent investigated the conditions of the isolated regions of the west of Ireland it appeared the famine characteristics of the 1840s had returned. In order to alleviate the poverty of those who lived in Connemara and south Mayo, Nugent implemented a plan of assisted emigration. The transfer of impoverished emigrants from Ireland to colonial lands had taken place throughout the nineteenth century. Nugent was the first to consider such ambitious plans for the poorest regions of the far west of Connemara and south Mayo. The success of the scheme had the potential to lead to thousands of emigrants leaving by similar methods. However by the 1880s, demand for land reform was a direct response to unemployment and the inability to pay rents. Assisting emigrants to North America was seen as removing the poorest from their lands and in turn ghettoising them in the cities along the east coast. The transfer of communities over generations such as had occurred in Newfoundland over sixty years from the 1780s onwards, did not occur in the Famine and post-Famine years.

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<sup>211</sup> Moffitt, *Soupers and Jumpers the Protestant Missions in Connemara 1848-1937*, pp139-140, 145

Assisted emigration was only considered as an emergency measure and further only considered in times of extreme hardship. What happened to the emigrants upon their arrival in America and Australia was often of little concern to those who paid for the transport. The systematic discrimination faced by the poorest transferred by this method was never considered. Not all proponents of assisted emigration considered the cost solely. Throughout the nineteenth century a very small number of humanitarian advocates of free emigration supported immigrants upon their arrival and in the subsequent months and years of their assimilation. Immigrants that transferred the community ties they had in Ireland, to the district they settled in fared best, despite the extreme poverty they faced. The success of Nugent's scheme depended on how well the scheme was organised and how well the families' who availed of it assimilated in their new community.



## Chapter 2: The Irish in America

Insofar as it is important to understand the environment Nugent's immigrants left in Ireland, and the factors which determined the mode of their departure, it is also important to understand the place the immigrants relocated to. The complex history of the Irish in America provides the backdrop for this particular narrative, but just as with all new arrivals to a location, the history or story that preceded a group of people can support or indeed hinder acculturation. By the late nineteenth century, immigrants were arriving to the U.S. from all over Europe, Asia and Canada. By 1880, the Irish had been arriving in America for a number of centuries. As one of the earlier groups of immigrants to avail of American opportunities, the Irish had, by this time, left their mark. Because of the significance of the Irish in America, an understanding of the Irish in the formation of the American nation, along with an understanding of the Irish and their place in the American expansion into the Mid-West is required. Furthermore, as the study of the Irish expands to include comparative analysis, it is important to compare the experiences of the Irish in America with other regions of Irish settlement across the globe. Such an approach can reveal patterns of assimilation or settlement that may be relevant to the study of Nugent's immigrants. By examining Irish immigration patterns beyond the United States the understanding of Irish-Minnesotan history may be broadened. The lack of definitive research on the Irish who settled in Minnesota has been filled by assumptions which have been based on stereotypes of Irish immigrants who settled in huge numbers in the mid-nineteenth century in the United States.

Irish-American migration cannot be understood as one continuous flow where levels increased as economic or famine crises increased in Ireland. Irish immigrant pathways must be viewed as various groups and waves of immigrants who, for any number of reasons left Ireland, primarily in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.<sup>212</sup> Ireland is not exceptional in

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<sup>212</sup> According to Miller only rough estimates can be made with regard to early emigration, as such it is estimated that 50-100,000 left in the 1600s of which three-fourths were Catholic while the remainder were mostly Anglican with some Quaker and Ulster Presbyterian migrations. From 1700 to 1776, 250-400,000 left of which one-fifth to one-fourth were Catholic, one-fifth were Anglican and the rest Dissenters, primarily Presbyterians from Ulster. The American Revolution interrupted the flow of emigration but from 1783 to 1814, 100-150,000 Irish emigrated of which two-thirds were from Ulster, primarily Presbyterians of Scottish ancestry, the remainder were Catholics and Anglicans from southern provinces. From 1815 to 1844, 800-1,000,000 Irish immigrated. In the heat of the famine and its aftermath, 1845-55, 1.8 million left Ireland for the United States. Between 1856 and 1921, 3.5 million immigrated to the United States. Kerby Miller, *Emigrants and Exiles, Ireland and the Irish Exodus to North America*, (Oxford, 1985), pp 137, 160-170, 193, 280, 346. By 1871, 1.8 million Irish born people were living in the United States. Delaney, Enda. "Directions in *historiography* Our Island Story? Towards a Transnational History of Late Modern Ireland", in *Irish Historical Studies*, xxxvii, no. 148 (November 2011), p.601;

migration history; much of what happened in Ireland occurred elsewhere in Europe.<sup>213</sup> Some of the numerous concerns in the study of Irish-Americans include the broadening in the definition of what constitutes an Irish immigrant. The seventy million people in the world who claim Irish descent have multiple identities, being, for example, American, Canadian and Australian in terms of national loyalties and Catholic, Baptist, Methodist, Anglican or Presbyterian in terms of religious identity. Akenson maintains in order for the historical study of the Irish of the United States to come of age, it should devote as much time to the Baptists, Methodists, Anglicans and Presbyterians as it does to the history of the Roman Catholics and their institutions.<sup>214</sup> Catholic Irish immigrants characterised by the adversity of famine received considerable attention from historians in the twentieth century. However, it must be remembered the study of Catholic Irish-Americans was secondary to the recurring historiographical emphasis placed on the Irish Presbyterian prominence in what is the story of the greatness or rise of America.<sup>215</sup>

The historiography of Irish-America primarily focused on the states or enclaves where large numbers of Irish settled. In turn, the effect of these locations provided different outcomes for subsequent generations and it is the study of Irish-Americans in a multigenerational context which proposes Irish-Americans as a category of study in themselves and not part of an Irish immigrant or indeed American immigration context.<sup>216</sup> The study of diaspora is complex; identifying the diversity of Irish immigrants in America and as a multi-generational ethnic group is fraught with challenges. This overview of the Irish in America is required to place Nugent's immigrants in the context of an orange and green divided and discriminatory jumble; from the urban settlements of the eastern cities, mill towns and mining villages to the western migrations and the creation of new towns and cities. All immigrants from Ireland are Irish but for the purposes of distinguishing the various waves

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<sup>213</sup> Akenson, Donald Harman, *Ireland, Sweden and the Great European Migration 1815-1914*, (Québec, 2011), p.7

<sup>214</sup> Akenson, Donald Harman, *The Irish Diaspora: A Primer*, (Toronto, 1996), p. 224

<sup>215</sup> Carroll, M. P., How the Irish Became Protestant, *America in Religion and American Culture: A Journal of Interpretation*, Vol. 16 No. 1 (winter, 2006), p. 27; Enda Delaney, 'Migration and Diaspora' in (ed) Alvin Jackson, *The Oxford Handbook of Modern Irish History*, (Oxford, 2014), p.131

<sup>216</sup> An extensive body of literature exists which includes; Arnold Schrier, *Ireland and the American Emigration, 1850 – 1900* (NY, 1970); Oscar Handlin, *Boston's Immigrants 1790 – 1880*, (1975); Doyle, David, *Irish-Americans, Native Rights and National Empires* (NY, 1976); Kerby Miller, *Emigrants and Exiles*, (1985); P.J. Drudy (ed), *The Irish in America: Emigration, Assimilation and Impact* (Cambridge, 1985); Donald H. Akenson, *Being Had: Historians, Evidence and the Irish in North America* (Toronto, 1985); T.J. Meagher, *From Paddy to Studs: Irish American communities in the turn of the century era, 1880-1920*, (Conn, 1986); David Fitzpatrick, *Irish emigration 1801-1921*, (1990); D. H. Akenson, *The Irish Diaspora: A Primer* (1996); Lawrence McCaffrey, 'Diaspora Comparisons and Irish-American Uniqueness' along with C.J. Houston and W.J. Smith, 'The Irish Diaspora: Emigration to the New World, 1720-1920', in Charles Fanning (ed.) *New Perspectives on the Irish Diaspora*, (2000); Kevin Kenny, *The American Irish*, (2000)

of Irish-American immigration, identification such as Catholic-Irish and Scots-Irish/Ulster-Scots have been applied.

## **Eighteenth Century Irish Immigration**

Irish immigration to America began in the seventeenth century when 50,000 to 100,000 people, three quarter of them Catholics, left Ireland for the American colonies. Sixty per cent of Irish immigrants to America in the seventeenth century indentured themselves for up to four years to pay the voyage. Early Catholic immigrants did not create a distinct community as they included few women and Catholicism was proscribed outside of Pennsylvania. Unlike Irish Catholics, Ulster Protestants had shallow roots in Ireland, having been sent there to secure that part of the island considered a nursery of conspiracy and rebellion. The very shallowness of their roots enabled Protestants to emigrate more easily.<sup>217</sup> In Ulster, Presbyterians worked primarily as farmer-craftsmen and lived apart from the wealthy Anglican elite and the majority of the population who were Catholic. Whatever dreams their ancestors had when they moved from Scotland had faded in the face of land shortage, famine, economic recessions, taxes and tithes along with religious discrimination. Opportunities in trade, land ownership or military service in new lands further encouraged emigration.<sup>218</sup>

Between 1717 and 1776, more than 100,000 Presbyterians left Ulster ports for Philadelphia and New York. A further 100,000 to 150,000 departed Ulster for America in the thirty years after 1783.<sup>219</sup> The communal cohesion which existed in Presbyterian Ulster was transferred in large measure to America as families, congregations and entire communities emigrated together. The collapse of the linen industry in the 1770s led to a mass exodus on the eve of the American Revolution as independent craftsmen found themselves on the brink of financial ruin, while smallholders and cottier-weavers were on the brink of starvation. Those who remained in Ireland provided the backbone of a revolutionary republican movement of the 1790s.<sup>220</sup> During the American Revolution, Ulster Presbyterians mobilised substantially in defence of the republic following the British invasions of New York and the

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<sup>217</sup> Meagher, Timothy J., *The Columbia Guide to Irish American History*, (New York, 2005), pp 20, 30-3, 32; Doyle, David Noel, 'The Irish in North America, 1776-1845' in *Making the Irish American: The History & Heritage of the Irish in the United States*, (ed.) J.J. Lee and Marion R. Casey, (New York, 2003), p.179; Enda Delaney, 'Migration and Diaspora' in (ed) Alvin Jackson, *The Oxford Handbook of Modern Irish History*, (Oxford, 2014), p.130

<sup>218</sup> Kevin Kenny, *The American Irish*, p.23

<sup>219</sup> Donald M. MacRaild and Malcolm Smith, 'Migration and Emigration, 1600-1945', (ed.) Liam Kennedy & Philip Ollerenshaw, *Ulster Since 1600 Politics, Economy, and Society*, (Oxford, 2013), p. 44

<sup>220</sup> Kenny, Kevin, *The American Irish*, pp 7, 11-12, 14, 19, 23

Carolinas in the 1770s and 1780s. After the war, their power and status were enhanced by their military success and by the political liberality of the confederated states.<sup>221</sup>

Protestants in Ireland in the eighteenth century called themselves Irish. With Catholics broken by nearly one hundred years of war in the seventeenth century, Protestant patriots, free from fear of Catholic rebellion, felt confident to assert their claim for their Ireland and cautiously began to consider some form of Catholic inclusion. The influence of the United Irishmen in America was considerable. The Catholic-Irish-Protestant alliance of the millennial age would reconstruct Catholics into model republican citizens.<sup>222</sup> By the late 1700s, the term 'Irish' became a more inclusive and more favourable 'appellation than ever before or since'. Democracy and national liberation would win over the 'dead weights of aristocracy, deference, and colonialism'. Yet, the influence of the Orange Order in the 1820s and the United Irish émigrés who led Catholic immigrants to the politics of the Jeffersonian and later Democratic parties meant that by the 1830s religious and political conflicts between Catholics and Protestants were common in America. In turn, 'Irish' was used to identify Irish Catholics and 'once more the term designated a group laden with negative stereotypes'.<sup>223</sup> The resulting sectarianism led Ulster immigrants to distance themselves from the Catholic influx by carving out a new identity of 'Scots Irish'.

Ulster Presbyterians settled in a number of American colonies, one of the first places they choose was New England but they quickly became unpopular. Among their Puritan neighbours, their reputation for drunkenness, blasphemy and violence earned them the title of 'Wild Irish' a century before it was inherited by Catholic Irish immigrants. They also settled in Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont and Massachusetts where they acted as a buffer between the zone of British settlement and areas populated by American Indians. Throughout the eighteenth century this role was enacted southward from Pennsylvania to Georgia. They settled in Pennsylvania in the 1720s where the colony's government provided land on attractive terms. They further moved from the Delaware ports to Pennsylvania's Susquehanna Valley, up into northeastern Pennsylvania and western New Jersey and down into northern Maryland. The Cumberland Valley by 1750 was overwhelmingly Ulster Protestants. They assimilated into American life, conforming easily to the 'national stereotype of rugged

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<sup>221</sup> Doyle, 'The Irish in North America, 1776-1845' in *Making the Irish American: The History & Heritage of the Irish in the United States*, (ed.) J.J. Lee and Marion R. Casey, p.177

<sup>222</sup> Meagher, Timothy J., *The Columbia Guide to Irish American History*, pp 22, 48

<sup>223</sup> Kerby A. Miller, Arnold Schrier, Bruce D. Boiling and David N. Doyle, *Irish Immigrants in the Land of Canaan: Letters and Memoirs from Colonial and Revolutionary America, 1675-1815* (Oxford and New York, 2003), p. 8; Doyle, 'The Irish in North America, 1776-1845', in Joseph Lee, Marion R Casey, *Making the Irish American: history and heritage of the Irish in the United States*, p. 183

individualism'.<sup>224</sup> Protestantism, if not always Presbyterianism, remained central to the identity of Ulster-Scots in America who established churches wherever they settled in deliberate opposition to the Anglican Church. Many frontier settlements lacked ministers and churches which resulted in many Ulster-Scots drifting away from religion altogether while others converted to Baptism or Methodism. The mass religious revival of the 1740s termed the 'Great Awakening' splintered American Presbyterianism, some of whose laity abandoned their faith for rival evangelical sects.<sup>225</sup>

Politics was further critical to Ulster-Scots self-determination amongst those who found themselves in frequent conflict with eastern authorities. In Pennsylvania, the Paxton Boys uprising of 1764 was in opposition to the ruling Quakers whom Ulster-Scots felt had abandoned them to the raids of Indians on the frontier. North Carolina experienced a more violent struggle as the political elite, largely Anglican in composition, denied political rights to Presbyterian backcountrymen. In the 1770s the Regulators replicated the agrarian tactics of Ulster agrarian protest movements, notably those of the Oakboys and the Steelboys. Violence was further evident in Pennsylvania with the Whiskey Rebellion of 1794. Backcountry leaders demanded social order compatible with their economic and political aspirations. Ulster-Scots acquired slaves in order to become as equal as other white Americans of the South. Race and slavery, even more than religion, were primary vehicles to assimilation. Conflicts between backcountry settlers and eastern elites lay behind much of the Ulster-Scots involvement in the American Revolution.<sup>226</sup> The different circumstances that confronted the three different Irish religious groups in eighteenth century 'eviscerated the distinctive institutional loyalties of each in its own way'.<sup>227</sup> The cultural diversity, religious freedom and political rights of all Irishmen were pioneered by Ulster-Americans and United Irishmen who had a better grasp of the link between mass politics and religious rights than the Irish in Ireland.<sup>228</sup>

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<sup>224</sup> Kenny, *The American Irish*, pp 23-24, 29; Meagher, *The Columbia Guide to Irish American History*, p. 36

<sup>225</sup> Meagher, *The Columbia Guide to Irish American History*, p. 37

<sup>226</sup> Kenny, *The American Irish*, pp 34-36; Meagher, *The Columbia Guide to Irish American History*, p. 40

<sup>227</sup> Meagher, *The Columbia Guide to Irish American History*, pp 38, 41

<sup>228</sup> Doyle, 'The Irish in North America, 1776-1845', in Joseph Lee, Marion R Casey, *Making the Irish American: history and heritage of the Irish in the United States*, p. 184

## Nineteenth Century Catholic Irish Immigration

Early nineteenth century Irish emigration developed within the dynamic of imperial trade in staple goods drawn from Britain's colonies in the New World.<sup>229</sup> In America, Irish Catholics pioneered a distinctive new society: fluid, democratic and innovative. They interacted with Anglo Americans for public and economic purposes but after 1850 they aligned with German Catholics for cultural and religious ones. From 1880 new European immigrants were attracted to the Irish looking for leadership in the formation of a modern mass society.<sup>230</sup> Despite Irish advancement, by the turn of the twentieth century, Catholic Irish immigrants remained likely to come from impoverished backgrounds thereby possessing fewer skills and little capital.<sup>231</sup>

The myth that America was an earthly paradise was not sold to the young in Ireland by those who had emigrated. Remittance letters, along with church and civic leaders on both sides of the Atlantic, warned of the difficulties emigrants faced upon arrival in America. Yet, it was the tangible evidence of the letters and the money within the envelope that helped to propagate the myth that American streets were paved with gold. The Irish in America did not deceive the Irish in Ireland of the hardship new immigrants faced in America; rather, the Irish in Ireland deceived themselves. 'As the Catholic peasantry's perception of Ireland became more negative and apocalyptic, the compensatory myth of American bounty became more necessary and appealing'.<sup>232</sup> In contrast to every other European group of immigrants the Irish stood alone. No other country maintained such a proportionately large emigration over so prolonged a period as Ireland. In the United States in particular, the urban ghettos of the north-eastern cities were repeatedly renewed by fresh waves of immigrants.<sup>233</sup> During the colonial years and up to the nineteenth century, affluent Irish Catholics mingled easily with the wealthy but as increasing numbers of impoverished Irish began arriving after 1830 the prosperous well established Irish began to feel the backlash. Irish Catholics who immigrated

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<sup>229</sup> Houston C.J., and Smyth, W.J., 'The Irish Diaspora: Emigration to the New World, 1720-1920', in B.J. Graham and L.J. Proudfoot (eds), *An historical geography of Ireland* (London, 1993), p. 339

<sup>230</sup> Doyle, David Noel, 'The Remaking of Irish America, 1845-1880', in Joseph Lee, Marion R Casey, *Making the Irish American: history and heritage of the Irish in the United States*, p. 214

<sup>231</sup> Fitzpatrick, David, 'Emigration, 1801-70', in W.E. Vaughan, ed., *A New History of Ireland, Vol. V: Ireland Under the Union, 1, 1801-70* (Oxford, 1989), pp 575-77, Miller, *Emigrants and Exiles*, (New York, 1985), pp 350-353

<sup>232</sup> Miller, Kerby A. and Boiling, Bruce D., 'Golden Streets, Bitter Tears: The Irish Image of America during the Era of Mass Migration', *Journal of American Ethnic History*, Vol. 10, No 1/2, The Irish in America (Fall, 1990 – Winter, 1991), pp 18, 22, 26, 28

<sup>233</sup> Houston C.J., and Smyth, W.J., 'The Irish Diaspora: Emigration to the New World, 1720-1920', in Graham, B.J., and Proudfoot, L.J., (eds), *An historical geography of Ireland*, p.34

before the Famine lived in rural and small-town settings where they were surrounded by Protestants. As these non-Catholic denominations, in particular the Baptist and Methodist, were better served by their church, it was not uncommon for Catholics to convert.<sup>234</sup>

As Irish Catholics began to swell into urban centres in the late 1840s, the established Anglo and Presbyterian communities resented their presence. Impoverished Irish were seen as a social plague, overcrowding their cities with their filth and antisocial behaviour, burdening their jails, hospitals, asylums and social welfare system. The Catholic Irish were attracted to the east coast cities where they rapidly urbanised for there existed in American wage labour a form of security and reward unavailable in rural Ireland.<sup>235</sup> No immigrant group was so disinclined to work in agriculture as the expatriate Catholic Irish partly because spade cultivation was of little use in the prairies.<sup>236</sup> The Irish displaced free blacks from many unskilled positions. They also joined volunteer fire companies and the police force in large numbers. Irish women were employed as domestic servants and in 'needle trades'.<sup>237</sup> The Irish labouring population developed into a peculiar subculture around the familiarities of the neighbourhood, the saloon and the parish where Irishmen met and organised 'for the protection of their livelihood, the improvement of their social position, and the maintenance of their religious faith'.<sup>238</sup>

In New England the Catholic Irish settled into highly structured communities disliked for their dissimilarity, according to McCaffrey, by the Yankee ruling class.<sup>239</sup> Most of the resentment was caused by the burden the care of paupers placed on tax payers and by the expansion of slums. Pauper prejudice and fear of Catholic domination saw nativists react violently from the 1830s to the 1850s. In 1834 a Catholic convent was burned to the ground in Charlestown near Boston, in 1844 a series of nativist assaults on Catholic churches and community centres in Philadelphia resulted in the loss of lives and led to the professionalization of the police force. In Boston Massachusetts, the Puritan suspicion of Catholics had disappeared in the revolutionary collaboration with the French by the early

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<sup>234</sup> Akenson, Donald Harman, *Ireland, Sweden and the Great European Migration 1815-1914*, (Montreal, 2011), p. 112

<sup>235</sup> Houston and Smyth, 'The Irish Diaspora: Emigration to the New World, 1720-1920', in Graham and Proudfoot (eds), *An Historical Geography of Ireland*, p.357

<sup>236</sup> Fitzpatrick, David, *Irish Emigration 1801-1921*, Studies in Economic and Social History 1, (Dublin, 1984), p.32

<sup>237</sup> Kenny, *The American Irish*, pp 62-63

<sup>238</sup> Doyle, David Noel, 'The Remaking of Irish America, 1845-1880', in (ed.) Joseph Lee, Marion R Casey, *Making the Irish American: history and heritage of the Irish in the United States*, p. 215

<sup>239</sup> McCaffrey Laurence, 'Diaspora Comparisons and Irish-American Uniqueness', in Charles Fanning (ed.), *New perspectives on the Irish Diaspora* (Carbondale and Edwardsville, 2000), p.21

nineteenth century.<sup>240</sup> However, by the mid nineteenth century impoverished Irish migrants entered a society where social order was divided and prejudice existed along colour and economic lines. Catholic Irish were identified as different and as foreigners hostile to native Bostonians who viewed Irish migrants as agents of the Pope intent on subverting the Protestant majority.<sup>241</sup> Boston was ill-equipped to receive the thousands of Irish who landed there and those who made their way south from New Brunswick and Quebec. During the famine era, Boston's death rate was higher than the rancid slums of England's industrial cities.<sup>242</sup>

In Worcester, Massachusetts, many of the first Irish settlers came from the southern coasts of Munster and Leinster. These earlier immigrants were joined by famine refugees who struggled to adapt to the city's industrial economy and to integrate with the older pioneer Irish. By 1880 Worcester was an industrial boom town of over fifty thousand people and spreading tenements. A peaceful accommodation had been found with neighbouring Yankees as memories of shared sacrifice during the civil war blotted out the Know-Nothing conflict that had divided Irish and Yankee before the war. Second-generation Irish emerged as confident Americans, proud of their birthright, experienced in the ways of urban industrial life and more successful than their immigrant parents or the newly arrived Irish-born.<sup>243</sup> Although the Irish in Worcester had embraced all that was American, prejudice and discrimination only got worse as they ascended the city's economic ladder at the end of the nineteenth century. The Yankee elite tightly controlled the city's bank, major industries and construction contracts along with providing the social capital to secure most if not all professional positions. Only 9 per cent of the city's Irish immigrants were white-collar workers and another 20 per cent toiled at blue-collar jobs.<sup>244</sup>

Ulster Catholics dominated Lowell, Massachusetts, by 1840 with a great many immigrants from Monaghan and Cavan. This number was greatly increased by the influx of Famine immigrants.<sup>245</sup> Forty years later, a growing population of new arrivals of French Canadians saw the Catholic Irish distance themselves from Lowell's latest pariahs. The

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<sup>240</sup> Handlin, Oscar, *Boston's Immigrants 1790 – 1880*, (Mass, 1959), pp 180-1

<sup>241</sup> Riforgiato, Leonard P., 'Bishop John Timmons, Archbishop John Hughes and Irish Colonization: a clash of Episcopal views on the future of the Irish and Catholic Churches in America' in Pencak, William, Berrol, Selma, and Miller, Randolph (eds.), *Immigration to New York*, (New York, 1991), p.42

<sup>242</sup> Meagher, *The Columbia Guide to Irish American History*, (New York, 2005), p.81

<sup>243</sup> Meagher, Timothy J., *Inventing Irish America Generation, Class, and Ethnic Identity in a New England City, 1880-1928*, (Notre Dame, 2002), pp 10, 24, 135

<sup>244</sup> Meagher, Timothy J., 'Irish, American, Catholic: Irish American identity in Worcester, Massachusetts, 1880 to 1920', in *From Paddy to Studs*, pp 78-79; *Inventing Irish America Generation, Class, and Ethnic Identity in a New England City, 1880-1928*, pp 102-3

<sup>245</sup> Meagher, *The Columbia Guide to Irish American History*, p. 56



arrival of French Canadians heralded the entry of successive waves of immigrants as Greeks, Poles and Jews settled in Lowell. The influx of new immigrant workers had ramifications for the Irish. As the mills employed the newer ethnics in the lowest paid positions the Irish lost ground, but on the other hand they gained significant advancement in other areas of employment. By 1900 the poorest of Lowell's Irish population had moved to skilled positions within the mills while middle-class Irish became an important social, economic and political force. The absence of a Yankee-American upper-class in Lowell gave advantage to the Irish over newer immigrants who could not speak English.<sup>246</sup>

Further along the east coast, Irish New York long antedated the Famine but the Famine remade the city forever: it's population was one-quarter Irish-born by the Civil War but by 1880 over one-third of its people were of Irish birth or parentage. New York was both the leading permanent destination and also the chief point of transfer, not only for incoming Irish but for the subsequent Irish-American generations.<sup>247</sup> The Irish of Five Points were the first of the immigrant groups to rail against the establishment who saw politics as the preserve of the wealthier classes. In the 1830s, Five Points was notorious for crime, prostitution, alcoholism and violence. Irish gangs like the Kerryonians and the Dead Rabbits gave the area a dangerous reputation.<sup>248</sup> Throughout the 1830s and 40s, the politics of Five Points became noted for violence, corruption, persuasion by force or by practical consideration.<sup>249</sup> Antebellum Five Points politics was run by saloon-keepers, grocers, policemen and fire companies. The American Party, a sectarian anti-Catholic and anti-Irish political movement won a majority of seats in the 1854 Boston state elections and polled 40 per cent of the vote in Pennsylvania. The Order of United Americans and the Order of the Star Spangled Banner were founded as nativist fraternities in New York City. Members of these associations became known as the Know Nothings.<sup>250</sup> By 1854 the Know Nothings were politically strong in Massachusetts, Maine, Pennsylvania and Indiana.<sup>251</sup> Despite attempts to curb Irish political involvement by the late 1850s, the Republican Party in New York City had difficulty in

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<sup>246</sup> Mitchell, Brian C., "“They do not differ greatly”: The Pattern of Community Development Among the Irish in Late Nineteenth Century Lowell, Massachusetts', in Meagher, *From Paddy to Studs*, pp 54, 56, 61-62, 68

<sup>247</sup> Doyle, David Noel, Cohesion and Diversity in the Irish Diaspora, *Irish Historical Studies*, Vol. 31, No. 123 (May, 1999), pp 425-6

<sup>248</sup> Kenny, *The American Irish*, p. 61

<sup>249</sup> Anbinder, Tyler, "We will dirk every mother's son of you", Five Points and the Irish Conquest of New York Politics – Nineteenth Century New York's Five Points Neighbourhood in *Eire-Ireland: Journal of Irish Studies*, Spring/Summer, 2001, pp 2-4

<sup>250</sup> Riforgiato, 'Bishop John Timmons, Archbishop John Hughes and Irish Colonization: a clash of Episcopal views on the future of the Irish and Catholic Churches in America' in Pencak, Berrol, and Miller (eds), *Immigration to New York*, (New York, 1991), p. 42; O'Grady, Joseph P., *How the Irish Became Americans*, (New York, 1973), pp 20, 38; Handlin Oscar, *Boston's Immigrants 1790 – 1880*, pp 187-189

<sup>251</sup> Timothy J. Meagher, *The Columbia Guide to Irish American History*, p.82

obtaining even 15 per cent of the Five Points vote.<sup>252</sup> Notwithstanding the efforts to prevent Irish political domination in Five Points in New York, Irish-Americans climbed the Tammany ranks and ultimately paved the way ‘for the eventual Irish conquest of New York politics’.<sup>253</sup> Contrary to their strength of numbers in the cities along the east coast the post Famine Irish remained in the lowest paid employment throughout the nineteenth century only rising above this status in the twentieth century. By 1900 first and second-generation Irish controlled more than one-third of all municipal employment in New York, Chicago, Boston, San Francisco, Albany and Jersey City.<sup>254</sup>

### Catholic Irish Identity

At the centre of the debates about the Irish diaspora is the complicated issue of race. Over the four centuries of Irish immigration the responses the Irish provoked were shaped by hierarchies of race. The Irish were perceived as inferior, unlikely to ever make any decent contribution to the host society and, for Irish Catholics, ‘their political loyalty was always open to question’. Middle-class journals such as *Punch* portrayed ‘Paddy’ with simian features. Such prejudices were given a ‘pseudo-scientific’ respectability by the emergence of social Darwinism in the 1870s.<sup>255</sup> In America, Catholic Irish identity was forged in opposition to a common enemy, identified as Anglo-Saxon and Protestant in Ireland, White-Anglo-Saxon-Protestant (WASP) in America. As the hordes of Catholic Famine immigrants began to ‘devalue the coinage of Irish identity’, the Ulster-Scots began putting distance between themselves and Catholics by joining nativist organisations and establishing Orange Order branches as part of an anti-immigrant and anti-Catholic campaign.<sup>256</sup> The Catholic Irish were drawn to the Democratic Party which was ‘the chief bastion of white supremacy and pro-slavery sentiment in the United States’, while The Catholic Church was influential in providing moral guidance to Irish immigrants on the question of slavery.<sup>257</sup> The relationship of Irish with blacks and Chinese in New York was initially amicable and based on shared

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<sup>252</sup> Anbinder, Tyler, ‘We will dirk every mother’s son of you’, pp 2, 6; Handlin Oscar, *Boston’s Immigrants 1790 – 1880*, p. 204

<sup>253</sup> Anbinder, ‘We will dirk every mother’s son of you’, p. 8

<sup>254</sup> Barrett, James R., *The Irish Way Becoming American in the Multiethnic City*, p.221

<sup>255</sup> Delaney, Enda, ‘Migration and Diaspora’ in (ed) Alvin Jackson, *The Oxford Handbook of Modern Irish History*, (Oxford, 2014), pp 132-3, 139

<sup>256</sup> Lee, J.J., Millennial Reflections on Irish-American History, *Radharc*, Vol. 1(Nov., 2000), pp, 34, 36-37, 52

<sup>257</sup> Kenny, *The American Irish*, pp 83-85

lowly conditions but as opportunities opened to the Irish alone these relationships deteriorated.<sup>258</sup>

Irish Catholics in America were isolated; nativist hatred created mental as well as physical ghettos as the Irish became marginalised, neither Irish nor American, more sensitive to 'the weight of tradition than to innovative possibilities for the future'.<sup>259</sup> Irish Catholics were not simply ostracised and left to their own devices within Irish slums in American cities as within these confines too they were pursued by the hatred of the Anglo-Americans who saw them as inferior white people. The Irish were eligible for citizenship and allowed to vote, but this did not infer any level of acceptance. Many native born Americans believed that their cultural, national, religious and political differences with Irish and other European immigrant groups meant the new immigrants were racially inferior. Such racial inferiority was 'biological and permanent' and such undesirable characteristics would prevent assimilation to American society and culture.<sup>260</sup> According to Kenny, 'this prejudice never amounted to racial subjugation worthy of the name', and the Irish got ahead 'precisely by exploiting the difference'.<sup>261</sup> Still, just as much as the Irish were segregated, the Irish also bullied their way to community prominence in multiethnic cities by name calling, taunting, beatings, racketeering and every sort of illegal method to exclude other ethnic groups.<sup>262</sup> They successfully exploited whiteness as an entrée into local societies' particularly in the South and West. Being white in America, the Irish 'fostered a collective identity that socially constructed whiteness, hindering any effective cooperation between the Irish and African-American in which might have been a powerful alliance of the powerless'.<sup>263</sup> Some historians of whiteness think the Irish failed to lead or join a broad radical political movement because of the 'allurements of status deference and power on the street'. Here again, states Meagher, 'the Irish are the poster boys – again largely boys – of American white supremacy'.<sup>264</sup>

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<sup>258</sup> Doyle, David Noel, Cohesion and Diversity in the Irish Diaspora, *Irish Historical Studies*, Vol. 31, No. 123 (May, 1999), p. 427; Barrett, *The Irish Way Becoming American in the Multiethnic City*, p.20

<sup>259</sup> McCaffrey, Lawrence J., *Textures of Irish America*. (Syracuse, 1992) p. 2; Miller, Kerby A., with Boiling, Bruce Boiling and Doyle, David N., 'Emigrants and Exiles: Irish Cultures and Irish Emigration to North America, 1790-1922' in *Irish Historical Studies*, Vol. XXII September 1980, p.105

<sup>260</sup> Egan, Catherine M., "White", if "not Quite": Irish Whiteness in the nineteenth century Irish-American novel -1 in *Eire-Ireland: Journal of Irish Studies*, Vol. 36 no. 1/2, (Spring/Summer, 2001), p. 66

<sup>261</sup> Kenny, Kevin, Symposium: Perspectives on the Irish Diaspora, *Irish Economic & Social History*; 2006, Vol. 33, p.50

<sup>262</sup> Barrett, *The Irish Way Becoming American in the Multiethnic City*, chapter 2, describes such behaviour, pp 13-54

<sup>263</sup> Delaney, Enda, 'Migration and Diaspora' in (ed) Alvin Jackson, *The Oxford Handbook of Modern Irish History*, (Oxford, 2014), p.133

<sup>264</sup> Meagher, Timothy, J. ' "The fireman on the stairs": communal loyalties in the making of Irish America', in J.J. Lee and Marion Casey (eds.), *Making the Irish American: The History and Heritage of the Irish in the United States* (new York, 2006), p. 612

According to Emmons it was in the years prior to civil war the predominant language of anti-slavery was also the language of anti-Catholicism with the Irish viewed as slaves to Catholicism. Northern labour was 'enslaved' to market driven wages and the liberation of such slavery was no less 'a moral imperative than the emancipation of the chattel slaves of the south'. Irish Catholics dominant in the organisation of the American working class were represented as 'white slaves'.<sup>265</sup> Anti-Irish nativism did not only include economic concerns - drunkenness, ignorance, laziness, moral laxity, idolatry, political indoctrination was further seen as 'obstacles to the emergence of a self-sufficient work force'.<sup>266</sup> Irish-Americans found safety in numbers and within organisations that afforded them protection. The organisations that defined Irish-Americans in the late nineteenth century included labour unions, the Catholic Church and the nationalist movement and provided the Irish a distinctive identity, one which was Catholic, Irish and American. By working with new immigrants groups in the late nineteenth century, Irish-Americans forged a modern America where ethnic nationalism was accepted.

## Labour Movement

Irish Catholics were not confined to the urban centres. Irish labourers in the 1810s and 1820s built the Erie Canal in New York, the Blackstone Canal to Worcester, Massachusetts, the Enfield Canal near Hartford Connecticut and the Farmington Canal to New Haven, Connecticut. In the 1820s to 1830s, Irishmen built the canals leading to the Pennsylvania anthracite region remaining there as labourers when canal work finished. Catholic Irish miners came into conflict with others working in the mining industry. By the 1820s the emerging coal mines in Schuylkill County, Pennsylvania, imported Welsh and English miners.<sup>267</sup> Irish immigrants were usually among the largest immigrant groups in America and often comprised a highly mobile proletariat 'acutely responsive to fluctuations in demand and unusually adept at securing the best of the worst jobs'.<sup>268</sup> Mass employment in textiles, construction, haulage, docking and shoe-making in Massachusetts, led to wider mass employment markets created by canals, roads and the railways. In reply, workers created America's first large scale workers' movements leading to the world's first working men's

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<sup>265</sup> Emmons, David M., *Beyond the American Pale The Irish in the West 1845-1910*, pp 70-71

<sup>266</sup> Kenny, *The American Irish*, p. 17

<sup>267</sup> Van Vugt, William E., 'British and British Americans (English, Scots, Scots Irish, and Welsh), to 1870', *Immigrants in American History Arrival, Adaptation, and Integration*, Elliott Robert Barkan, (ed.) (California, 2013), p.26

<sup>268</sup> Fitzpatrick, David, Irish Emigration in the Later Nineteenth Century, *Irish Historical Studies*, Vol. 22, No. 86 (Sep., 1980), p.134

parties in Philadelphia and New York in 1828-9. The first phase of organising the inter-city National Trades Union in 1834 was almost wholly unconnected with the Irish while the riots of 1844 were a serious setback for attempts to unionise the Irish and control the paradox of the Irish weakening traditional labour. Following the riots, union leaders restricted union membership and left the unskilled Irish to informal and often violent activity.<sup>269</sup>

Despite the poverty of Catholic Famine Irish, they arrived in America at an opportune time. The treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo of 1848 added over one million square miles to the territory of the U.S. After 1850 the country's rail network grew providing construction jobs which developed the northeast industrial core. Manufacturing plants increased employment for the new immigrants by 50 per cent.<sup>270</sup> Irish immigrants were not without some prior knowledge of the skills of mid-Victorian modernity before going to America but some were 'truly uprooted and bewildered', particularly, those who came from the south-western mountains and peninsulas and the congested regions of Connacht. In the South, Irish labourers worked on the same projects as slave labourers. The canal to Lynchburg in Virginia was dominated by Irish labourers. The New Basin canal from New Orleans to Lake Ponchartrain was built by Irish labourers recruited in Philadelphia and in Ireland. The exploitation of the industrial revolution led to the foundation of powerful, Irish led, trade union movements, but not without a struggle characterised by violence as workers fought for access to employment. The canal gang combats along the banks of the Chesapeake and Ohio canal in 1834 were fought by Cork men against men from Longford.<sup>271</sup> Such 'internecine skirmishes' between the Corkonians and the Fardowns, were in part sectarian but also 'a reflection of a highly persistent localism that was eroded only slightly by a nascent sense of nation'.<sup>272</sup> American unions owed a great deal to Irish social movements. The Molly Maguires were directly linked to an Irish secret society of the Whiteboy type. In Chicago similar tactics of intimidation and violence were common and in early labour protests among Irish immigrants. The secrecy and rituals of the Knights of Labour were shaped by employers' hostility to the group and by American Masonic traditions. Despite the Catholic

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<sup>269</sup> Doyle, 'The Irish in North America, 1776-1845', in Joseph Lee, Marion R Casey, *Making the Irish American: history and heritage of the Irish in the United States*, p.194

<sup>270</sup> Doyle, David Noel, 'The Remaking of Irish America, 1845-1880', in Joseph Lee, Marion R Casey, *Making the Irish American: history and heritage of the Irish in the United States*, p. 218

<sup>271</sup> Kenny, *The American Irish*, pp 64-65; Doyle, 'The Irish in North America, 1776-1845', in Joseph Lee, Marion R Casey, *Making the Irish American: history and heritage of the Irish in the United States*, (New York, 2007), p. 188

<sup>272</sup> Campbell, Malcolm, *Ireland's New Worlds: Immigrants, Politics and Society in the United States and Australia, 1815-1922*, (University of Wisconsin, 2008), p.20

denunciation of secret societies, the Knights' large Irish Catholic membership embraced the approach.<sup>273</sup> As secret societies declined, the Irish became leaders and organisers in the American trade union movement. The union would ultimately drive out competitors from other ethnic groups and was a tactic the Irish employed on the docks in New York and New Orleans. By the 1880s an estimated 90 per cent of New York dock workers were Irish or Irish-American.<sup>274</sup>

For the Irish in America, 'labouring proved for some a lottery and for others a life-sentence, sometimes mitigated by some job security and by family earnings'. Throughout the U.S., the Irish-born from 1850 to 1880 were disproportionately labourers, servants and semi-skilled workers. Modest social advancement came with the arrival of southern and eastern Europeans. The census of 1860 indicated the Irish were increasingly urban with almost 44 per cent of the 1.6 million Irish-born living in 43 of the U.S. leading cities. In the period 1850-1870 the Irish-born were not comparatively more urban born than other immigrants but dramatically more so than native born.<sup>275</sup> The jobs the Irish took were often extremely dangerous. America had the highest rates of industrial mortality in the world where brutalised labourers grew accustomed to replacing killed or injured workmates on assembly lines and pit crews 'without pause or murmur'.<sup>276</sup> Irish labourers in the mid-nineteenth century performed a wide variety of tasks, they worked as longshoremen, as cartmen and teamsters hauling goods throughout the cities, as coal heavers, lumberyard men, quarrymen, pipe layers, street pavers, ditch diggers, boatmen and bricklayers. They erected the buildings, paved the streets, quarried the stones and laid out the parks in cities from New York to New Orleans, Boston to Buffalo, Jersey City to Waltham, Massachusetts and Detroit to San Francisco.<sup>277</sup>

By the 1860s, the Irish dominated the powerful Longshoremen's and Labourers' United Benevolent Society of New York. The foundation and leadership of the American Miners' Union included Irishmen, while the largest union in the United States, the Workingmen's Benevolent Association which mobilised 35,000 anthracite mine workers in Pennsylvania in 1868, was led by John Siney who had been born in Ireland. The Molly Maguires in the

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<sup>273</sup> Barrett, *The Irish Way Becoming American in the Multiethnic City*, (New York, 2013), p.111

<sup>274</sup> Barrett, *The Irish Way Becoming American in the Multiethnic City*, pp 112, 116-117

<sup>275</sup> Doyle, David Noel, 'The Irish as Urban Pioneers in the United States, 1850-1870', *Journal of American Ethnic History*, Vol. 10, No. 1/2, The Irish in America (Fall, 1990 – Winter, 1991), pp 40-41, 51

<sup>276</sup> Kerby A. Miller, 'Assimilation and Alienation: Irish Emigrants' Responses to Industrial America, 1871-1921', in P.J. Drudy, ed. *The Irish in America: Emigration, Assimilation, Impact*, p. 97

<sup>277</sup> Doyle, David Noel, 'The Remaking of Irish America, 1845-1880', in Joseph Lee, Marion R Casey, *Making the Irish American: history and heritage of the Irish in the United States*, p.234

anthracite region of Pennsylvania represented a ‘hybrid form between traditions of Irish agrarian protest and American-style trade unionism’.<sup>278</sup> The key to labour reform in the late nineteenth century was its relationship with Irish nationalist organisations. In New York, Chicago, Pittsburgh, the anthracite fields, and elsewhere, the two movements shared personnel and resources.<sup>279</sup> The Knights of Labour of the 1880s with 750,000 members maintained practices of secrecy, oath-taking and social ostracism that had originated in rural Ireland. But conscious that their foreign origins made their American loyalties seem suspect to nativists, Irish-Americans developed a form of patriotism, mixing militant Catholicism with American superpatriotism. The Knights continued to grow in the decades that followed.<sup>280</sup>

By 1870, nine out of ten Irish born lived in the eighteen states of the nation’s developed northern core. The preference of the male newcomer for mobile, often outdoor work found men taking railroad and construction jobs and leaving factory work to immigrant single women. The urban-industrial counties of the core states contained small cities, factory towns, and mill villages. The Irish preferred counties ‘geared to their own sense of distance’ which helps explain the irony that their concentration increased even as urban America spread.<sup>281</sup> Supplements to family income which made the difference between poverty and comfort in Irish working families were less available in the west. Outside of the eastern cities domestic servants were usually native born, German or Scandinavian, and in the South, black. These survival patterns kept families in the East. Further, according to Lee it seems likely that females may have exerted influence on males as to where to settle as the major source of immediate employment for females was to be found in the urban centres as domestics.<sup>282</sup>

Although women achieved little in the realm of politics, nationalism and trade unionism they did have greater influence in the more important private realm of the home. Hasia Diner suggested that within Irish-American communities the political realm belonged to males but this does not account for the public role of women involved with the Land

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<sup>278</sup> Kenny Kevin, *The American Irish*, p. 111, 112

<sup>279</sup> James R. Barrett, *The Irish Way Becoming American in the Multiethnic City*, (New York, 2013), pp 109-111

<sup>280</sup> Kenny, *The American Irish*, pp 109-110; Meagher, *From Paddy to Studs*, p. 13

<sup>281</sup> Doyle, David Noel, ‘The Remaking of Irish America, 1845-1880’, in Joseph Lee, Marion R Casey, *Making the Irish American: history and heritage of the Irish in the United States*, p. 223-6

<sup>282</sup> Doyle, David Noel, ‘The Remaking of Irish America, 1845-1880’, in (ed.) Joseph Lee, Marion R Casey, *Making the Irish American: history and heritage of the Irish in the United States*, p.230; J.J. Lee, Introduction: Interpreting Irish America, in *Making the Irish American: The History & Heritage of the Irish in the United States*, (ed.) in idem and Marion R. Casey, p.32

League.<sup>283</sup> The poorest Irish, overworked and often destitute were reliant upon their own networks and institutions that were distinctly theirs as few social supports existed and families were put at risk. Not all women were passive and some women held leading positions within unions; Margaret Haley founded the Chicago Federation of Teachers and was a leading figure in the Chicago Federation of Labour. Margaret Mahoney, physician and public school teacher became the first President of the San Francisco Federation of Teachers. Mary Harris, schoolteacher and prominent labour and community organiser helped to found the Industrial Workers of the World. Regardless of the advances of women within unions most women remained in non-union employment by the turn of the twentieth century when 60 per cent of Irish women worked as domestic servants. Domestic service was difficult with many working up to 85 hours a week and often seven days a week. The Irish domestic was stereotyped as stupid and ignorant and mockingly called ‘Biddy’ or ‘Bridget’, yet it was by working as domestics that Irish women learned how the middle-class lived and in turn educated their daughters. In many cities by the late nineteenth century, second-generation Irish women abandoned domestic service and broke into the ranks of white collar workers. In Worcester, second-generation women matched up better against ethnic competitors such as natives, Swedes and French Canadians than second-generation Irish males. By 1908 over 20 per cent of New York and Boston public schoolteachers were the children of Irish immigrants.<sup>284</sup>

From the 1870s onwards Irish immigrants reflected a pervasive disappointment with their urban-industrial life and only rarely did they encourage departures by praising America’s economic opportunities. Immigrant letters accurately reflected the difficulties of working-class life in a ‘highly unstable, ruthlessly competitive and even physically brutal industrial economy’. Life in America was a precarious existence where workers feared of becoming destitute.<sup>285</sup>

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<sup>283</sup> Hasia Diner, *Erin’s Daughters in America: Irish Immigrant Women in the Nineteenth Century*, (Baltimore, 1983), pp 128, 150

<sup>284</sup> James R. Barrett, *The Irish Way Becoming American in the Multiethnic City*, pp 123-129, 140-2; Timothy J. Meagher, *Inventing Irish America Generation, Class, and Ethnic Identity in a New England City, 1880-1928*, pp 111-2

<sup>285</sup> Kerby A. Miller, ‘Assimilation and Alienation: Irish Emigrants’ Responses to Industrial America, 1871-1921’, in P.J. Drudy, ed. *The Irish in America: Emigration, Assimilation, Impact*, pp 93-94



## Catholic Church

Religion offered a means of assimilation for the Protestant Irish but for the Catholic Irish, rather 'it acted as a conservative defence of their ethnic distinctiveness'.<sup>286</sup> By the 1840s, Irish Catholic solidarity was nurtured in the Catholic centres of Philadelphia, New York, Cincinnati, Chicago and Pittsburgh under the guidance of Irish Bishops long resident in America and familiar with its ways. Establishing Catholic schools and under the banners of temperance and benevolent societies, Catholic optimism of the 1830s existed within republican institutions and in a context of the separation of church and state. The capacity of the United States to absorb two million Irish immigrants and the existence of a subculture familiar to Catholics ensured the tragedy of the Famine was less horrific than otherwise might have been.<sup>287</sup>

In the decades after the famine the Irish consolidated their power within the Catholic Church which in turn emerged as the most powerful Christian denomination in the United States. The Church provided a living, breathing, powerful ideological influence for communalism.<sup>288</sup> The recognisable structure of the church became the basis for both German and Irish 'ethnic villages' throughout the cities of the Northeast. The Catholic Irish in America have been seen as the victims in the historical narratives of nineteenth century America while Catholic Irish leaders such as Archbishop John Hughes of New York City are thought to have prevented the assimilation or the Americanisation of generations of Irish.<sup>289</sup> Hughes, it has been argued, encouraged a 'ghetto mentality' among American Catholics by concentrating on the 'paradoxical strategy of pursuing the power of the "insider" by keeping the stigma of outsiderhood constantly attached to the people he tried to lead'.<sup>290</sup> The 'devotional revolution' of the mid-nineteenth century culminated in an austere, distinctively Irish and widely popular form of Catholicism which placed emphasis on authority. Unlike their secularised European counterparts, the working-class Irish exhibited a fierce loyalty to

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<sup>286</sup> C.J. Houston and W.J. Smyth, 'The Irish Diaspora: Emigration to the New World, 1720-1920', in B.J. Graham and L.J. Proudfoot (eds), *An historical geography of Ireland*, pp 360-1

<sup>287</sup> Doyle, 'The Irish in North America, 1776-1845', in Joseph Lee, Marion R Casey, *Making the Irish American: history and heritage of the Irish in the United States*, pp 195-197, 204

<sup>288</sup> Meagher, Timothy, J. ' "the fireman on the stairs": communal loyalties in the making of Irish America', in J.J. Lee and Marion Casey (eds), *Making the Irish American: The History and Heritage of the Irish in the United States* (New York, 2006), p. 613

<sup>289</sup> Riforgiato, Leonard P., 'Bishop John Timmons, Archbishop John Hughes and Irish Colonization: a clash of Episcopal views on the future of the Irish and Catholic Churches in America' in (ed.) William Pencak, Selma Berrol, and Randolph Miller, *Immigration to New York*, p.54

<sup>290</sup> R. Laurence Moore, 'Insiders and Outsiders in American Historical Narrative and American History', *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 87, No. 2 (Apr., 1982), p. 402

the church and overwhelmingly identified with their neighbourhood parish.<sup>291</sup> Irish peasant society was the ‘antithesis of the socially fluid, rapidly expanding, democratic republic of the United States’. Irish immigrants found themselves opposed to the major crusades of the day – public education, temperance, sabbatarianism, women’s rights and abolitionism. These movements were deeply infused with a spirit of evangelical Protestantism; consistently the language of reform was the language of nativism. The Church responded to nativist attacks by contending that Irish Catholics made ideal Americans having fled Ireland in search of religious and political tolerance.<sup>292</sup>

The Irish controlled the Catholic Church hierarchy by 1900, two thirds of all the American Catholic Bishops were Irish born or of Irish decent in the most important dioceses, New York, Baltimore, Boston, Philadelphia, Detroit, St Paul and San Francisco. The Catholic hierarchy and clergy in the late nineteenth century fell into three broad camps, liberal, conservative and radical. The liberals led by Cardinal James Gibbons of Baltimore and Archbishop John Ireland of St Paul were the most powerful. The liberals defended organized labour. They condemned economic privilege and political corruption but defended capitalism and American-style democracy. They were ‘Americanizers’ who encouraged self-reliance, thrift, temperance and respectability. Men like John Ireland and Bishop John Keane ‘waxed rhapsodic’ about their love for the United States. They believed America would become a super-power spreading democracy and individualism around the world and felt the Catholic Church should lead that mission.<sup>293</sup> Liberal Catholicism received most of its support from middle and upper class Irish-Americans, from workers who espoused temperance, and from the towns and cities where the Irish were more closely integrated into native society. Second-generation Irish provided most of the members of the temperance societies whose emergence was quiet and gradual but powerful in the everyday life of local Irish communities.<sup>294</sup> The liberals were unlikely leaders for the Irish-speaking peasant immigrants of the 1890s many of whom gravitated to either the conservative or the radical camp. Unlike the liberals and the radicals, the conservative Catholic leaders opposed memberships of labour organizations. Men like Bishop Ireland were liberal on questions of education and labour, but were more conservative when it came to ethnic and national assertiveness within the American Catholic Church. German and Polish churches were tolerated but only as long

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<sup>291</sup> Barrett, *The Irish Way Becoming American in the Multiethnic City*, p.61

<sup>292</sup> Kenny, *The American Irish*, pp 75-77, 114

<sup>293</sup> Meagher, *The Columbia Guide to Irish American History*, p.111

<sup>294</sup> Meagher, *Inventing Irish America Generation, Class, and Ethnic Identity in a New England City, 1880-1928*, p.9

as they answered to the Irish dominated hierarchy.<sup>295</sup> No matter how Americanized they may have become the ‘fidelity of Irish Americans to their religion prevented them entering the American mainstream’. By the early twentieth century a ‘Catholic ghetto’ had begun to rise distinguishing a Catholic American sub-culture and a separate Catholic subsociety.<sup>296</sup>

## Nationalism

The origins of Irish nationalism are to be found in Daniel O’Connell’s Catholic Emancipation and Repeal movements. In Irish-America, nationalism lay in the alienation and poverty of the immigrant experience, where Irish-Americans developed ‘a pervasive sense of inferiority, intense longing for acceptance and respectability, and an acute sensitivity to criticism’.<sup>297</sup> America differed to Ireland in that America was more democratic and provided more opportunity for effective political action.<sup>298</sup> The Famine left Irish-Americans with a well-developed and widely shared collective memory. Post-Famine Irish immigrants were the children and grand-children of the tragedy in an Ireland ‘significantly shaped, physically and psychologically, by the impact of the disaster’.<sup>299</sup> The perception that the Famine had caused emigration can partly be explained by Irish-American nationalism in the post-Famine period and the ‘charged political propaganda produced by nationalist ideologues’.<sup>300</sup> The Famine became the focal point which crystallised Irish America’s search for historical understanding of who they were, from 1880, a new generation of Irish and Irish-Americans, set a new tone. The New Departure of 1878 was a compromise between the leaders of post-famine Irish-America with the more ‘pragmatic attitudes’ of these new leaders and fused constitutional nationalism, agrarian radicalism and fenianism.<sup>301</sup> The Catholic Church in America had opposed nationalistic organisations such as the Young Irelanders, the Fenians and Clan na Gael but in the 1880s the majority of Catholic clergymen supported the Land League. Constitutional nationalism was attractive as violence had a negative impact on the image of

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<sup>295</sup> Kenny, *The American Irish*, pp 164-170

<sup>296</sup> Meagher, *From Paddy to Studs*, p. 14

<sup>297</sup> Thomas N. Brown, *Irish-American Nationalism, 1870-1890* (Philadelphia, 1966), p. 23

<sup>298</sup> J.J. Lee, Introduction: Interpreting Irish America, in *Making the Irish American: The History & Heritage of the Irish in the United States*, (ed.) J.J. Lee and Marion R. Casey, p.24

<sup>299</sup> J.J. Lee, ‘Introduction: Interpreting Irish America’, in *Making the Irish American: The History & Heritage of the Irish in the United States*, (ed.) in idem and Marion R. Casey, p.21

<sup>300</sup> Delaney, Enda, Symposium: Perspectives on the Irish Diaspora, *Irish Economic & Social History*; 2006, Vol. 33, pp 36, 41-2

<sup>301</sup> Doyle, David Noel, ‘The Remaking of Irish America, 1845-1880’, in (ed.) Joseph Lee, Marion R Casey, *Making the Irish American: history and heritage of the Irish in the United States*, p. 216

the Irish in America, most notably in the cases of the Draft Riots of 1863, the Orange and Green Riots of 1870 and 1871 and the Molly Maguire affair of the 1860s and 1870s.

Middle-class members of the Land League were concerned with improving the conditions of the Irish people in Ireland but more importantly, improving the status of the Irish in America. While historians agree the middle-class desire for social progress supported the Land League others believe the rank and file of nationalists came from much further down the social scale who sought a revolutionary change in the old country's economic and political systems. The radical Catholic priest and anti-poverty campaigner, Dr Edward McGlynn from Hell's Kitchen supported the Land League and single tax candidate Henry George but was excommunicated by the Vatican for his strong views.<sup>302</sup> Not all of the working class became involved with nationalist campaigns and Pittsburgh's impoverished immigrants from Connacht seemed left out of the nationalist agitation entirely. Land League clubs sprung up all over America – as many as 15,000 branches with 500,000 members. Along with the middle-class, the vast majority of clergymen who associated with the Land League provided useful protection against critics' claims that its goals were too radical. Ambitious Irish-Americans felt they could not achieve respect in the new world until the shame of Ireland's slavery had been wiped away in the old.<sup>303</sup> It was the rising middle-class Irish who were to be found in the leadership of many Land League branches. In Denver the Irish Americans who were most active in local branches were lawyers, judges, politicians, newspaper editors and building contractors. National conventions were disproportionately dominated by men of white-collar status. Irish American life permitted women few opportunities for a public role. Despite their lack of inclusion, women were hugely important to the Land League movement being organised in branches of the Ladies Land League. In Worcester, the women's league was more active and more successful in fundraising than any other branch of the city. They jumped at the opportunity to engage in the nationalist movement even if it meant defying their priests and leaders.<sup>304</sup>

By giving their support to the Land League, church officials bestowed a respectability on the organisation that was absent in the cases of the Young Ireland and Fenian movements. The churchmen distrusted the revolutionary aims of Clan na Gael while their involvement in the League allowed them to exert a moderating influence. In freeing Ireland, Irish Americans would free themselves from nativist insults and 'challenges to their fitness for American

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<sup>302</sup> James R. Barrett, *The Irish Way Becoming American in the Multiethnic City*, p.91

<sup>303</sup> Meagher, *From Paddy to Studs*, p. 11; *The Columbia Guide to Irish American History*, pp 112, 200, 206

<sup>304</sup> Meagher, *The Columbia Guide to Irish American History*, p.206

society’.<sup>305</sup> Irish-American support for nationalism differed according to social position and recency of arrival in the United States. Middle-class or ‘lace curtain’ Irish were firm supporters of constitutional nationalism under C.S. Parnell and the least likely to support extremism. The radical working-class supported Clan na Gael under the leadership of John Devoy in the late 1870s and soon it became the most powerful Irish republican organisation on both sides of the Atlantic. Rather than seeking respectability, these workers seized upon the Irish nationalist agitation as a rallying point for economic reform. Recently-arrived Irish immigrant men had difficulty in adjusting to a new life in America with much of their energy given to ethnic or nationalistic politics often fuelled by alcohol and lamentations of exile and banishment. However, according to Kenny the case of new immigrants arriving in the 1880s is less clear-cut with one historian finding that those who came from Munster ‘arrived with a well-developed sense of nationalism whereas Irish-speakers from Connaught evinced little interest in nationalism of any kind, their allegiances still being primarily local’.<sup>306</sup>

The great number of visible Irish organisations obscures the fact that vast numbers of immigrants quickly dropped out of ethnic networks. According to Fitzpatrick, most Irish-Americans probably did not join Irish clubs or subscribe to Irish causes.<sup>307</sup> By the early twentieth century, Irish-Americans remained a higher proportion of the nation’s paupers than any other white ethnic group; mortality rates from tuberculosis remained appallingly high while Irish emigrants made up a disproportionately high percentage of patients in public mental institutions.<sup>308</sup>

## Catholic Irish Migrants Beyond North-Eastern Cities

By 1880 Boston was considered the most unrepresentative city in America from an Irish perspective. ‘The obstacles to social mobility were more formidable in the particularly unfriendly ... socially rigid, intensely anti-Catholic milieu than in any other city’.<sup>309</sup> However, it was not Yankee prejudice so much as the constraints imposed by their work and income which slowed Irish migration to the west.<sup>310</sup> Most Irish-Americans eventually made their

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<sup>305</sup> Ely M. Janis, *A Greater Ireland, The Land League and Transatlantic Nationalism in Gilded Age America*, (Wisconsin, 2015), pp 96-101

<sup>306</sup> Meagher, *From Paddy to Studs*, p. 12; Kenny, *The American Irish*, pp 150-1, 173-175

<sup>307</sup> Fitzpatrick, *Irish Emigration 1801-1921*, *Studies in Economic and Social History* 1, pp 35-36

<sup>308</sup> Kerby A. Miller, ‘Assimilation and Alienation: Irish Emigrants’ Responses to Industrial America, 1871-1921’, in P.J. Drudy, ed. *The Irish in America: Emigration, Assimilation, Impact*, pp 96-97

<sup>309</sup> Lee, J.J., Introduction: Interpreting Irish America, in *Making the Irish American: The History & Heritage of the Irish in the United States*, (ed.) in idem and Marion R. Casey, pp 7, 12

<sup>310</sup> Meagher, *Inventing Irish America Generation, Class, and Ethnic Identity in a New England City, 1880-1928*, p.128

livelihoods and raised families outside of eastern cities. The chief dispersal of the Irish took place within the expanding economy of the Middle West which includes areas such as upstate New York and west Pennsylvania towns and cities along the Great Lakes and Mississippi river system network. Some of the most successful Irish colonies in New York State are to be found along the Erie Canal from Troy to Buffalo. Other prosperous Irish colonies were to be found along the Illinois Canal from Chicago to Peoria while the Irish in southern New York and Northern Pennsylvania are to be found along the lines of the Erie and Lackawanna Railroad. Throughout the nineteenth century this entire region was further opened up by canal and rail.

By the end of the nineteenth century substantial numbers of first and second-generation Irish Americans had moved west from the East Coast. Among these were the young, literate and more resourceful new comers. Denver in Colorado was an important centre of Irish settlements as was the mining community of Butte, Montana.<sup>311</sup> There were almost 1.9 million Irish-born in the United States by 1870 with almost half of them in New York, Massachusetts, and Pennsylvania. More than 220,000 were in California, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Nebraska and Colorado. The Irish also made up more than half of the western army guarding the frontiers of the Dakotas, Wyoming, Montana and Kansas.<sup>312</sup> Before the Civil War the northern cities of Cleveland, Chicago, Detroit, Pittsburgh, Buffalo and Rochester contained large Irish populations. The southern cities of New Orleans, Natchez, Mobile, Memphis, Nashville and Louisville also contained large groups of Irish but from 1860 they began to decline sharply which may be due in part to strong nativist resentment and the competition in the labour market from former slaves. By 1900 less than one fifth of the Irish-born and second-generation Irish lived in New England, 30 per cent lived in the Mid-Western and Plains states, 30 per cent lived along the Mid-Atlantic coast from New York down to Washington D.C. while in the South, the mountain states and on the west coast approximately 10 per cent or the remainder were scattered with one half in the West and one half in the South.<sup>313</sup>

The increase of migrants in the 1870s packed cities and compelled them to swell. Relief was offered throughout the United States by settlement programmes, designed to cultivate the

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<sup>311</sup> Kenny, *The American Irish*, p.143

<sup>312</sup> David M. Emmons, 'Irish Catholics and Irish-Catholic Americans, to 1870', *Immigrants in American History: Arrival, Adaptation, and Integration*, edited by Elliott Robert Barkan, (California, 2013), p. 93

<sup>313</sup> Doyle, D.N., The regional bibliography of Irish America, 1800-1930: a review and addendum, in *Irish Historical Studies*, xxiii, no. 91 (Antrim, 1983), pp 255-256

vast unpopulated regions of the North and West. The civil war had freed black slaves and the lands of the west were available to be claimed by immigrants and blacks alike. The thought of free black people claiming the land of the west concerned those who viewed the west as the only remaining desirable place to live. The land west of the cities of the east coast was destined for those with the independent spirit of the republic. Northern Reformers easily mixed anti-slavery with anti-Catholic rhetoric.<sup>314</sup> Yankee hostility did not only extend to freed slaves but also to what they identified as inferior human beings such as Catholic Irish. Catholics would contaminate the west and destroy all they came in contact with. According to Emmons, nativists in America in the nineteenth century saw themselves as being of the American pale which marked cultural borders just as the notion of the Pale of Dublin distinguished Anglo Irish from native Catholic Irish. The American palesman was always a white male, usually native-born or of British decent. 'If not themselves westward wanderers, the Americans within the pale were at least convinced that going westward was a very American thing to do and that a westerner was a very American thing to be'. The concept of the west combined the two definitions of what it meant to be of the pale. The West as a place and 'westerling' as a process were joined. 'The West was God's gift to Americans ... Going west defined them and proved that they were deserving of this provincial favour'. Providence, in America as in Britain and Ireland, 'assumed an inflexible and tenaciously held sectarian aspect'. As in English-ruled Ireland, to be within the American pale, one had always to be a Protestant.<sup>315</sup>

Those who were committed to the west belonging solely to nativists felt slaves had to be contained; in the South with regard to Blacks and with regard to Irish Catholics in the slums of the eastern cities. Opponents of Irish Catholics such as George Templeton Strong identified them as 'ferocious human pigs', and in 1867 noted the 'celtocracy' of the North was 'as bad as a niggerocracy' in the South, and in some respects worse.<sup>316</sup> Despite the discrimination that existed, Irish Catholics headed west as part of the American expansion of the 1870s. Upward mobility and social acceptance of post-Famine Irish in the north-east was often determined by the location the Irish settled in. However, it would seem that, the further west the Irish went, the more successful the Irish and their subsequent generations became. Those who did head west had to be resolute and have with them some financial backup.

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<sup>314</sup> Emmons, *Beyond The American Pale: The Irish In The West 1845-1910*, (Oklahoma Press, 2010), pp 79, 82

<sup>315</sup> Emmons, *Beyond The American Pale The Irish In The West 1845-1910*, p. 5

<sup>316</sup> *ibid*, p.95

Making the decision to leave the security of urban city life protected by community and church indicated ambition and a desire to do better.

In Chicago in the 1830s and 1840s thousands of immigrants crowded into Bridgeport working in constructions jobs and on the Illinois and Michigan Canal.<sup>317</sup> By 1880, Irish Catholics had risen from their shanty towns along the river to become Chicago's most powerful political and religious group. Just as the Catholic Irish had in Worcester, the Catholic Irish of Chicago accepted an identity that was 'nearly devoid of Irish content' by working with the city's native born Protestants.<sup>318</sup> By the 1880s the Catholic Church had become the largest denomination despite nativist attacks. Irish Bishops dominated the Catholic Church from the 1830s to the 1880s and while Germans, Poles, Lithuanians and Slavs looked for national parishes the Irish by default gained control of the English-speaking parishes, thereby dominating the institutional church from below as well as above. Priests such as Daniel J. Riordan created parochial structures that were 'strictly' Catholic and American in outlook. He established St Elizabeth's parish which included the city slum along with professionals ensuring the poorest Irish were exposed to an unequivocal middle-class Catholicism.<sup>319</sup>

Irish control of the Catholic Church in the 1880s was matched only by the success of the Irish in Democratic Party politics. As active supporters of Irish nationalism, Chicago's Irish supported Clan na Gael which held close links to the Democratic Party. But political power often reinforced negative Images of Chicago's Irish as did their support for the Dynamite campaign in England. Constitutional nationalism such as that offered by Parnell did much to redeem the nationalist cause but the death of Parnell and the murder of Dr Patrick Cronin, a critic of the leaders of Clan na Gael, turned most Irish away from nationalism. Groups such as the Ancient Order of Hibernians and the Irish Rifles continued in existence but in closer connection with the Catholic Church. Rather than sacrifice their economic gains the Irish withdrew their support from the nationalist cause.<sup>320</sup>

Further west, the Irish fared well in St Louis where a strong foundation of French-speaking Catholicism had been established in the 1820s. These settlers were joined by about one hundred well educated Irishmen, many of them veterans of French military service who quickly established a tradition of Irish acceptance. This solid base of respectability survived

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<sup>317</sup> Barrett, *The Irish Way Becoming American in the Multiethnic City*, p.15

<sup>318</sup> Skerrett, Ellen, 'The Development of Catholic Identity Among Irish Americans in Chicago, 1880 to 1920', *From Paddy to Studs*, (ed.) Meagher, Timothy J., p.119

<sup>319</sup> *ibid*, pp 120-121, 122, 125

<sup>320</sup> *ibid*, pp 128, 130, 136



the advent of the Famine Irish who moved into an urban situation that differed substantially from the east coast experience.<sup>321</sup> St Louis nativists were slow to exhibit an anti-Catholic stance as it cost them votes. The Famine Irish began life in St Louis at the lowest level and by the 1880s little had changed. In the last three decades of the nineteenth century, St Louis politics was dominated by Irish-Americans who represented both Democrats and Republicans. The Irish did well in large measure due to their familiarity with Anglo-Saxon governmental principles and instruments. Although the Irish did join Irish organisations, for the greater part, the Irish of St Louis joined Catholic organisations such as the Knights of Columbus.<sup>322</sup> St Louis had a high degree of Catholic acceptance and a multi-ethnic population which led to tolerance. In such an atmosphere, the socio-economic position of the Irish along with other ethnic groups rose in the latter decades of the nineteenth century.

The urban settlement centres where Catholic Irish settled had been established by 1850 with the exception of California which owed its position to the coincidence of annexation, gold rush and famine migration.<sup>323</sup> The success of Irish Catholics in San Francisco is what distinguishes them from any other group of Irish-Americans. San Francisco was the ‘polar opposite of Boston, providing a much more hospitable environment for Irish economic and social performance’.<sup>324</sup> From the founding of the city in 1852, the Irish held prominent professional positions. Twenty years later, the San Francisco Irish occupied far more high status positions than their fellow countrymen in Philadelphia or Boston. By 1880 the Irish were the largest ethnic group in San Francisco and an Irish middle-class dominated the city’s politics. The Irish made up at least 10 per cent of the population in ten of the city’s wards. But unlike other American cities, Irish politics was not centred on a political machine such as Tammany Hall or ethnic politics. The advantage of the Irish in San Francisco is that they had arrived when the city was founded but had previously resided in the eastern cities of New York, New Orleans, Boston and Philadelphia while others came from Sydney Australia. These Irish who were willing to take the risks may also have been the most talented of Irish-Americans. The dynamic economy and material wealth of California suited those willing to take risks. Furthermore, the lack of an established elite provided advantages for all immigrant communities. Anti-immigrant sentiment on the West Coast was directed at Asian immigrants

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<sup>321</sup> Martin G. Towey, ‘Kerry Patch Revisited: Irish Americans in St. Louis in the Turn of the Century Era’, *From Paddy to Studs*, edited by Meagher, pp 140-1,

<sup>322</sup> *ibid*, p. 155

<sup>323</sup> Doyle, David Noel, ‘The Remaking of Irish America, 1845-1880’, Joseph Lee, Marion R. Casey, *Making the Irish American: history and heritage of the Irish in the United States*, p.226

<sup>324</sup> Lee, Introduction: Interpreting Irish America, in *Making the Irish American: The History & Heritage of the Irish in the United States*, (ed.) in idem and Marion R. Casey, p.12

with European immigrants escaping the role of 'nativist scapegoat'. The Irish on the West Coast never developed a ghetto mentality so prevalent in Eastern cities.<sup>325</sup>

The two inherent features of Irish cultural identity in San Francisco were Irish Catholicism and nationalism. Lack of discrimination allowed the Catholic Church to disseminate the faith among successful Americanized immigrants. Under the leadership of Archbishop Riordan, a close friend of John Ireland, the church developed on a liberal framework. Irish republicanism was the second important force that unified all classes. By 1880, Irish nationalism centered upon the Ancient Order of Hibernians and the Land League. In the cities of the east, a free and independent Ireland was necessary to elevate the Irish in the eyes of Americans but in the West the Irish had respectability, economic success and social status, yet paradoxically the San Francisco Irish became strong nationalists. Successful Irish-Americans were sensitive to Irish nationalism not because of feelings of inferiority but of self respect. Given the opportunities, the Irish of Ireland, if freed and independent, would be as successful as the Irish of the West Coast. It was this same rationale that was used to encourage Irish immigrants to move west.<sup>326</sup> Although there is no doubt of the success of the San Francisco Irish, it is important to retain a certain perspective. By 1880 two-thirds of the Irish-born in America lived on the east coast. The Irish population of San Francisco was far less than that of Chicago and New York. In 1870, the Irish born population of New York was greater than the combined populations of the next six biggest centres of Irish settlement including, Philadelphia, Boston, Chicago, San Francisco, St. Louis and Cincinnati.<sup>327</sup>

## **Immigrant Comparisons: Irish-Americans and Irish-Australians**

The United States was the world's leading industrial power by 1895. Australia was two-thirds urban by 1891 but remained unpopulated and underindustrialised for decades more. Comparisons of the range of Irish experiences in Australia and the United States is important 'not only for what it may reveal about the similarities and differences of the two settler societies, but also for the insights it will provide in to varying experiences of Irish

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<sup>325</sup> Sarbaugh Timothy, *Exiles of Confidence: The Irish-American Community of San Francisco, 1880 to 1920*, in *From Paddy to Studs*, (ed.) Meagher, pp 163-165; Meagher, *The Columbia Guide to Irish American History*, p.85

<sup>326</sup> Sarbaugh Timothy, 'Exiles of Confidence: The Irish-American Community of San Francisco, 1880 to 1920', *From Paddy to Studs*, edited by Meagher, pp 166, 170, 172

<sup>327</sup> Lee, 'Introduction: Interpreting Irish America', in *Making the Irish American: The History & Heritage of the Irish in the United States*, (ed.) in idem and Marion R. Casey, p.13

immigrants’.<sup>328</sup> The most significant feature for this particular study is Campbell’s assertion that a strong propensity for rural life and work was a feature of Irish Australian settlement throughout the nineteenth century which ‘challenges profoundly the arguments made repeatedly in the U.S. literature that the Irish were inherently incapable of or adverse to rural life in the New World’. Campbell further recommended American scholars of Irish immigration to re-examine the Irish settlements of Minnesota and Wisconsin.<sup>329</sup> The overall theme of this work is the assessment of emigrants from their place of departure to the locations they eventually settled in. As the comparative method has been used ‘to illuminate the varied nature of the migrant experience’, comparing Irish-Americans to Irish-Australians of similar backgrounds, indicated the differences and similarities of Irish immigrants who settled a world apart from one another.<sup>330</sup>

The period of the greatest inflow of Irish to Australia was during the years 1850 to 1870 which was just over a half century after the establishment of the British penal colony at Sydney. And yet, it is this arrival of Irish immigrants in the early part of Australian development that gave the Irish presence legitimacy. ‘There was in other words, an openness about society, and the Irish role in it that much more closely resembled the American West Coast than the East Coast’.<sup>331</sup> Irish emigration to Australia was unique in that it was largely subsidised by the colonial and imperial governments. Another crucial difference was that Australian immigration was ordered and protected in a way American immigration was not. Government regulation and control had begun with convict transportation and continued with colonial state assisted immigration schemes. From the Famine to the 1890s more than four-fifths of Irish emigration to the Australian colonies was state-assisted. This had two important consequences, it greatly broadened the social spectrum of potential settlers by reducing the cost of transit and secondly it gave administrators as well as market forces a part in determining the regional distribution of emigrants. The counties contributing most heavily to American and Australian immigration in the later nineteenth century were those where high unemployment resulted from the contraction of tillage. But in the Australian case there is

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<sup>328</sup> Campbell, Malcolm, ‘The Other Immigrants: Comparing the Irish in Australia and the United States’, *Journal of American Ethnic History*, Vol. 14, No. 3 (Spring 1995), p.17

<sup>329</sup> Campbell, Ireland’s Furthest Shores: Irish Immigrant Settlement in Nineteenth-Century California and Eastern Australia, *Pacific Historical Review*, Vol. 71, No. 1 (February 2002), p 74; Other Immigrants: Comparing the Irish in Australia and the United States, *Journal of American Ethnic History*, Vol. 14, No. 3 (Spring 1995), p. 17

<sup>330</sup> Delaney, Symposium: Perspectives on the Irish Diaspora, *Irish Economic & Social History*; 2006, Vol. 33, pp 30- 40

<sup>331</sup> Campbell, Ireland’s Furthest Shores: Irish Immigrant Settlement in Nineteenth-Century California and Eastern Australia, *Pacific Historical Review*, Vol. 71, No. 1 (February 2002), pp 69, 71, 73

greater evidence of an association between emigration and the loss of higher paid employment.<sup>332</sup> In the United States the districts where the Irish had the greatest presence were disproportionally industrial and urban but in Australia and Ontario, the Irish availed of the opportunity to settle in agricultural districts more readily than other emigrant groups.<sup>333</sup>

As in North America, the Irish presence in Australia predated 1800 although the circumstances of their arrival ensured a very different reception and assimilation. Irish-born convicts were among the first arrivals of the 1780s but it was not until 1791 that Irish convicts were sent directly from Queenstown to New South Wales. By the 1820s and 1830s Irish convicts were arriving at an average rate of about 1000 a year.<sup>334</sup> Forty thousand Irish convicts were deported up to 1853 and a second phase in 1867 saw a small number of Fenian prisoners transported. According to Campbell the convicts accounted for only 12 per cent of the Irish that settled in nineteenth century Australia but their influence in shaping subsequent patterns of migrations from Ireland far exceeded their numbers.<sup>335</sup>

By the mid-nineteenth century, the Irish outside of Ireland were densely clustered in the industrial midlands and north of Britain, from Cheshire and Yorkshire to Northumberland, with minor clusters in London, the West Country and South Wales. In Scotland the Irish mainly settled in Glasgow. Britain was the most attractive destination for those wishing to increase their earnings without abandoning hope of future earnings at home. Returning from America was more difficult but not uncommon but the long and hazardous journey to Australia involved a far more complete separation. Short distance emigration was most attractive to those with scant resources but with some prospect of advancement at home whereas long-distance emigration was most attractive to those who were left behind by modernisation. They may have had cash but little or no opportunity in Ireland.<sup>336</sup> In Canada the Irish settled in Ontario, Quebec and along the St Lawrence River and in the United States the Irish concentrated along the north-east and north-central regions. All of these regions were relatively urban and industrial with large numbers of immigrant groups. However, in Australia the diffusion of Irish immigrants was remarkable. Within the Australian cities the Irish were more evenly distributed. The wide diffusion of Irish along with other immigrant

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<sup>332</sup> Fitzpatrick, Irish Emigration in the Later Nineteenth Century, *Irish Historical Studies*, Vol. 22, No. 86 (Sept., 1980), pp 131-3; O'Farrell, *The Irish in Australia: 1788 to the present* (Cork, 1996), p. 65

<sup>333</sup> Fitzpatrick, Irish Emigration in the Later Nineteenth Century, *Irish Historical Studies*, Vol. 22, No. 86 (Sept., 1980), p.135

<sup>334</sup> O'Farrell, *The Irish in Australia: 1788 to the present* (Cork, 1996), p. 23

<sup>335</sup> Campbell, Malcolm, *Ireland's New World's: Immigrants, Politics, and Society in the United States and Australia, 1815-1922*, p.12

<sup>336</sup> Fitzpatrick, Irish Emigration in the Later Nineteenth Century, *Irish Historical Studies*, Vol. 22, No. 86 (Sep., 1980), pp 128-9

groups was a consequence of the paucity of the native born. In two respects Irish settlement in Australia was distinctive in that the Irish showed a marked tendency to settle where the English and Scottish did not. The largest clusters of Irish were to be found in the relatively populous localities often enclosing major towns.<sup>337</sup>

A further factor which contributed to successful Irish assimilation in Britain and Australia was the fact that ethnicity did not assume the historical significance that it did in the United States where it was more central to national self-identification in the nineteenth century than elsewhere. Kenny states that determining the region within Ireland where the Irish immigrated from is critical to understanding their histories in their receiving countries. The impoverished counties of the west of Ireland were overrepresented in migration to the United States but underrepresented in migration to Britain and Australia. Prosperous Ulster immigrants sent disproportionate numbers to Canada, Scotland and New Zealand while substantial farmers and labourers of the south midlands of Leinster and Munster, provided the majority of Irish Catholic immigrants to Australia.<sup>338</sup> The complexity and diversity of the patterns of global Irish settlements cannot be explained by simply describing Irish immigrants of the last three centuries as the 'Diaspora'. Should the term, 'diaspora' imply involuntary immigration or coercive immigration then the term cannot be applied to Ireland. Irish migration in the modern era went through five chronological phases, 'each of them internally diverse'.<sup>339</sup> The Irish experience in the several phases was unconnected in many respects, apart from the fact that people left the same island.

In New South Wales, the numerical strength of the Irish presence was a crucial factor in shaping their adjustment; the Irish entered a 'fluid society' where access to land was easy. The prominence of both Catholics and Protestants was important along with where the immigrants originated from, their social background and the skills and capital they brought with them. Of further importance was 'the prevailing ideology of the locality within which they settled'. Leading Irish settlers of all religious backgrounds were active in shaping the character of their regions. Catholic and Protestant land holders in south west New South Wales worked together to construct churches for all denominations.<sup>340</sup> David Noel Doyle argued that Irish-Australians and Irish-Americans were quite similar but Campbell noted for

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<sup>337</sup> Fitzpatrick, Irish Emigration in the Later Nineteenth Century, *Irish Historical Studies*, Vol. 22, No. 86 (Sept., 1980), p.137

<sup>338</sup> Kenny, Diaspora and Comparison: The Global Irish as a Case Study, *The Journal of American History*, Vol. 90, No. 1 (Jun., 2003), pp 136-7

<sup>339</sup> Kenny, Kevin, : Perspectives on the Irish Diaspora, *Irish Economic & Social History*; 2006, Vol. 33, p. 47

<sup>340</sup> Campbell Malcolm, The Other Immigrants: Comparing the Irish in Australia and the United States, *Journal of American Ethnic History*, Vol. 14, No. 3 (Spring 1995), pp 5-7

this to be true it is essential to clarify which Irish-Americans. 'In terms of time of settlement, extent of economic opportunity and much other shared historical experience, there is compelling ground for comparison between the Californian Irish and the Irish in eastern Australia'.<sup>341</sup> The Irish in America along the East Coast encountered a labour market determined to increase production and reduce costs where labour market competition often saw Irish immigrants treated less favourably. In New South Wales the scale of production was far smaller than that of the U.S. East Coast which ensured a society devoid of class realignment as occurred in major American cities. Further in eastern Australia a strong spirit of bipartisanship characterised most dealings between Protestants and Catholics before 1850.

One of the differences between the Californian Irish and the Australian Irish was the fact that those who settled on the West Coast arrived having spent a transitional period elsewhere. The Irish of eastern Australia had arrived there directly from Ireland. Assisted immigration to Australia, according to Campbell, provided a 'predeparture filter of the immigration stream', which suggests 'a similarity to the informal selection processes through which a minority of the Irish in the United States deliberately relocated to California'. The interlude in the eastern cities helped to explain the Irish propensity to settle in San Francisco or the Bay Area. The Irish, on the other hand, that immigrated directly to Australia were drawn from the ranks of displaced labourers who had no such urban schooling.<sup>342</sup> Not only were the Irish in California as numerous as the English and Scots but their language and customs distinguished them from European and Asian immigrants. Campbell states the differences between emigrants who left for Australia and those who immigrated to the east coast of the United States were determined principally by when in Irish-American history the immigrants' arrived and the structure of the society where the immigrants settled. A further point outlined by Campbell which also determined immigrants' success was 'the capital, skills and personal qualities of the immigrants themselves'.<sup>343</sup> This latter point is hugely significant as it may provide the answers as to why some people were successful on the Minnesota prairie while others were not. By the second half of the nineteenth century, the Irish in Australia, particularly the Irish of New South Wales found a further advantage by an almost perfect sex balance where Irish males and females had excellent chances of finding a marriage partner within the Irish population. Early marriage meant settlement in communities

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<sup>341</sup> Campbell Malcolm, *The Other Immigrants: Comparing the Irish in Australia and the United States*, *Journal of American Ethnic History*, Vol. 14, No. 3 (Spring 1995), pp 13-14

<sup>342</sup> Campbell, *Ireland's Furthest Shores: Irish Immigrant Settlement in Nineteenth-Century California and Eastern Australia*, *Pacific Historical Review*, Vol. 71, No. 1 (February 2002), pp 82-83

<sup>343</sup> Campbell Malcolm, 'The Other Immigrants: Comparing the Irish in Australia and the United States', *Journal of American Ethnic History*, Vol. 14, No. 3 (Spring 1995), p. 3

where security and comfort was prioritised. The weakness of the established native classes, the extent of the Irish in colonies and the even balances of the Irish sexes, all contributed to that 'striking normality of Irish settlement patterns within Australia'.<sup>344</sup>

The Famine response was different in Australia and America, so too, was the response to Irish nationalism in the latter decades of the nineteenth century. At the outset, the Australasian colonies would seem to have offered fertile ground for the growth of Irish nationalism. The deportation of 600 political prisoners in the wake of the 1798 rebellion, the addition of 1,000 convicts who were transported to New South Wales in the subsequent decades, followed by the deportation of Young Irelanders and Fenians, would seem to have provided sufficient grounds for a rise in anti-British sentiment, but this did not occur. Veterans of the 1798 rebellion included those who were considered reluctant even accidental rebels in Ireland who adapted and settled in Australia. 'The long-term effects of 1798 were to protect Australia from subsequent Irish nationalisms, to dampen their local fires', according to O'Farrell.<sup>345</sup> Irish nationalism in the U.S. as noted previously, was a means of assimilation: 'nationalism became a means of expressing not only an ethnic but also an international or diasporic sense of Irishness that transcended any simple desire for acceptance in the host land'.<sup>346</sup> However in Australia most Irish-Australians supported constitutional nationalism and remained fearful that Irish nationalism would raise sectarian tensions and interfere with the relative harmony that existed in the Australasian colonies. According to Campbell, the Irish in Australia were participants in the British Empire and were 'subject to the ideology and hegemony that underpinned the empire'. Within the imperial context, nationalism was for the Australian Irish not a means towards assimilation but a potential cause for estrangement.<sup>347</sup> Moreover, the Irish of the U.S. lived in a republic which existed as a consequence of a successful rebellion against Britain, whereas in Australia, Irish-Australians were part of the British Empire, 'reliant on that empire for defence and status and self-image and cultural orientation'.<sup>348</sup>

In the Famine years there was a contrast between the fortunes of the Irish in America and those in Australia. According to Kenny, the Famine migration lends itself well to a

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<sup>344</sup> Fitzpatrick, Irish Emigration in the Later Nineteenth Century, *Irish Historical Studies*, Vol. 22, No. 86 (Sept., 1980), p. 137

<sup>345</sup> O'Farrell, *The Irish in Australia: 1788 to the present* (Cork, 1996), pp 31-2

<sup>346</sup> Kenny, Kevin, Diaspora and Comparison: The Global Irish as a Case Study, *The Journal of American History*, Vol. 90, No. 1 (Jun., 2003), p. 159

<sup>347</sup> Campbell, Malcolm, Irish Nationalism and Immigrant Assimilation: Comparing the United States and Australia, *Australasian Journal of American Studies*, Vol. 15, No. 2 (December 1996), pp 29, 34-36

<sup>348</sup> O'Farrell, *The Irish in Australia: 1788 to the present* (Cork, 1996), p. 162

strictly comparative approach. The Famine Irish immigrant in America, scarred by the events of the 1840s remained in the cities and manufacturing regions whereas the Australian Irish exhibited no fear of returning to the land. By 1850 ex-convicts and free settlers in Australia were the beneficiaries of the colony's insatiable demand for labour. In addition, Australia also was relatively untouched by Irish immigration in the worst of the famine years. The rise of Irish nationalism in the 1860s was greeted with excitement in America while in Australia, Young Ireland leaders, were sent into exile to Van Diemen's Land where they had little impact upon Irish-Australians. For most of the 1848 leaders their sojourn in Australia was temporary, Australia was too far from the great centres of the world's business. 'Australia was too far away, too British and its Irish too few and convict to attract the leaders of Irish nationalism'. Community antagonism towards the Irish was rife in 1868 resulting from the shooting and wounding of Prince Alfred in Sydney Harbour. Further, a fund established to assist freed Fenians to return to Ireland was viewed with hostility by Australians of non-Irish background and wealthy Irish-Australians. According to O'Farrell, 'Fenianism was too strong a meat for the average Irish-Australian stomach'. Overall in nationalistic terms, it was the leaders of the 1798 rebellion that Irish-Australians turned to as their founding fathers. If convict origins could not be denied they could be otherwise interpreted positively and transformed 'into assets to serve the interests of a triumphalist apologia for Irish Catholicism'.<sup>349</sup>

Although it has been agreed by historians that the Famine cannot be described as genocide, the historical memory of Famine in Australia and America when compared, has provided different outcomes and conclusions. The collective memory of Famine in the United States viewed Irish immigration as a forced exodus caused by British misrule but there is little evidence to suggest the existence of similar shared memories in other countries the Irish settled in such as Britain, Canada, Australia and New Zealand.<sup>350</sup> Famine memory of North America saw John Mitchel's genocide thesis widely accepted, but it has been argued that in Australia the Famine was viewed as an act of God that the English had responded to with nobility and generosity. In 1880 the Irish famine relief appeal was seen in Australia as a

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<sup>349</sup> O'Farrell, *The Irish in Australia: 1788 to the present* (Cork, 1996), pp 47-9, 51-2, 215; Kenny, *Diaspora and Comparison: The Global Irish as a Case Study*, *The Journal of American History*, Vol. 90, No. 1 (Jun., 2003), p. 144; Campbell, *Ireland's New Worlds: Immigrants, Politics and Society in the United States and Australia, 1815-1922*, pp 21, 30-31, 38-39; Campbell, *Ireland's New Worlds: Immigrants, Politics, and Society in the United States and Australia, 1815-1922*, pp 111-112

<sup>350</sup> Delaney, Enda, 'The Irish Diaspora', Alvin Jackson (ed.) *Migration and Diaspora*, The Oxford Handbook to Modern Irish History, p. 42



‘genuinely humanitarian movement’ that concerned all colonists.<sup>351</sup> The response led to public meetings being held in Brisbane, Melbourne and Sydney, attended by Government ministers, parliamentary representatives, leading churchmen and civic dignitaries. The generosity of Australians during the crisis of 1880 outshone every other country that contributed including the United States. Australian generosity further extended to Home Rule but was more cautious with regard to the Land War, particularly among those who resided in the cities. The attitude towards Parnell during the crisis of 1880, even among nationalistically-minded Irish expatriates, was ambiguous. According to Geary, Parnell and his politics were admirable as long as they were confined to Ireland or even the United States but they were ‘too controversial and divisive for Victoria’.<sup>352</sup> Irish-Australian settlers compared to Irish-Americans seem to have been more socially mobile, more inclined to intermarry with other ethnic or religious groups and less inclined to belong to ‘Irish’ organisations.<sup>353</sup>

The process of Irish inclusion on the West Coast of America lay with the society’s perception of itself as something new and different. In eastern Australia too, an egalitarian ideology and religious tolerance were the principal defining characteristics of colonial society. The Irish of the West Coast were also less opposed to abolition which spared California’s Irish from the legacy of bitterness that resulted from the Irish American resistance to the antislavery cause. Discrimination against Chinese immigrants by California’s Irish was yet another feature shared with the Irish of eastern Australia where the Irish were ‘strongly positioned on the privileged side of the colour bar that increasingly dominated Australian national life’.<sup>354</sup> Overall, the Irish in California and the Irish of eastern Australia shared a number of common features which differentiated both groups from the Irish of the East Coast of America. Such success was determined by their early arrival to the region, their preparedness for their new environments, the openness and diversity of the new society and the presence of non-white immigrant groups. In brief, the Irish were most successful or acculturated most successfully in areas where they were a part of the dominant original settler group. The presence of a visible other immigrant group with a distinguishable

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<sup>351</sup> Geary, Laurence M., ‘The Australasian Response to the Irish Crisis, 1879-80’, in Oliver MacDonagh and W.F. Mandle (eds.), *Irish-Australian Studies: Papers Delivered at the Fifth Irish-Australian Conference* (Canberra, 1989), pp 108, 111

<sup>352</sup> Geary, ‘The Australasian Response to the Irish Crisis, 1879-80’, in Oliver MacDonagh and W.F. Mandle (eds.), *Irish-Australian Studies: Papers Delivered at the Fifth Irish-Australian Conference* (Canberra, 1989), p. 118; O’Farrell, *The Irish in Australia: 1788 to the Present*, p. 221

<sup>353</sup> Fitzpatrick, *Irish Emigration 1801-1921*, *Studies in Economic and Social History* 1, p. 36

<sup>354</sup> Campbell, *Ireland’s Furthest Shores: Irish Immigrant Settlement in Nineteenth-Century California and Eastern Australia*, *Pacific Historical Review*, Vol. 71, No. 1 (February 2002), pp 84, 87

difference provided opportunities for the Irish to be less discriminated against but to discriminate themselves. In essence, the Irish of the west coast of America and of eastern Australia were a part of the majority who were also vocal against a visible minority. Such an insider position provided the opportunities to the Irish that they had been denied on the East Coast of America. Immigrants in the United States became American by becoming Irish-American. The development of an ethnic identity among the Irish in America involved a struggle over power within the Irish community itself and with the host society.<sup>355</sup>

## **The Irish Head West to Minnesota**

The first Irish entered the Great Lakes region by way of the Ohio Valley and Appalachian mountain passes. The initial settlers worked as rivermen, traders and frontier scouts. The Irish were heavily represented in frontier military garrisons after the war of 1812 but it was the canal building era up to the 1850s which was more responsible for bringing Irish to the Great Lakes. From 1830 to 1860 the Irish began to work at building railroads and by 1860 more than 36,000 Irish were employed on the railroad. Railroad employment improved the economic situation of the Irish and a network of Irish railroad workers was built up throughout the Great Lakes from Toledo in Ohio to St. Paul in Minnesota. As sawmill towns were erected many Irish became employed in the lumber industry throughout Michigan, Wisconsin and Minnesota. In the Great Lakes the Irish were less ghettoised and isolated and although Catholic they became a more liberal Catholic, 'heavily influenced by American values', brought about through the influence of Archbishop Ireland of St. Paul and Cardinal Gibbons of Baltimore who were supportive of labour unions and critical of *laissez-faire* capitalism.<sup>356</sup>

Minnesota became a territory in 1849 and in 1858 it became one of the United States. During those nine years Minnesota's European-American population grew from less than 5,000 to more than 150,000.<sup>357</sup> By 1850, 68 per cent of the British Isles born population in the Minnesota Territory was of Irish birth. Of the 71 counties of Minnesota, 66 were considered rural and 13,764 or almost 48 per cent of the population were Irish-born by 1870.

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<sup>355</sup> Kenny, Diaspora and Comparison: The Global Irish as a Case Study, *The Journal of American History*, Vol. 90, No. 1 (Jun., 2003), p. 151

<sup>356</sup> Metress Seamus, The Great Lakes Region and the American Irish in *Irish Roots*, Issue no. 56, No. 4, (Cork, 2005) pp 22-23

<sup>357</sup> Rhoda R. Gilman, The History and Peopling of Minnesota: Its Culture in *Daedalus*, Vol. 129, No. 3, Minnesota: A Different Minnesota? (Summer, 2000), p.2

Two of these counties contained over 1,000 Irish-born settlers.<sup>358</sup> Catholic Irish-Americans who made their way to the western parts of the United States were identified as the ‘two-boat Irish’, which was a phrase used by the Irish for those who ventured from their initial landing site.<sup>359</sup> The first pioneers were interested in hunting and trapping and had no interest in cultivating large tracts of land. The settlers who followed had no thought of establishing a permanent residence in any one location and as soon as their farms increased in value they were content to take the profits and move on to new lands or even to the city. As such the initial settlers were often mere speculators.

Although millions of Irish had migrated to America during the Famine period and the years that followed, few had managed to reach Minnesota. Efforts were made by Irish leaders in America, in particular the clergy, to entice the Irish from the cities of the east and it was from here and Canada that the first Irish settlers came to Minnesota. The Catholic Colonization Bureau was but one of a number of organisations in the early nineteenth century to consider the transfer of immigrants from the east coast to the fertile lands of the prairies. In 1790 Mathew Carey founded an emigrant aid society in Philadelphia and in 1814 Dr Robert Hogan founded another in New York. Three years later New York’s Irish Emigrant Association along with the Hibernian Societies of Philadelphia and Baltimore petitioned Congress for a grant of land in Illinois territory. Although the petition was unsuccessful it highlighted the fact that some of the older Irish networks had begun to consider the developing states and territories of the west.<sup>360</sup> In 1839 Hogan and William J MacNeven, a survivor of 1798 and a leader of the Irish in New York established the Irish Emigration Society. MacNeven had published, *Hints to Irishmen Who Intend with their Families to Make a Permanent Residence in America* in New York’s first ‘Irish’ newspaper the *Shamrock* in 1816 encouraging immigrants to acquire land in the west.<sup>361</sup>

The Catholic Emigration Society which was established by Daniel O’Connell and others in Dublin in 1843 saw emigration as a vital auxiliary relief but rejected the view of

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<sup>358</sup> Campbell, Malcolm, Immigrants on the Land: Irish Rural Settlement in Minnesota and New South Wales, 1830-1890, in *New Hibernia Review* 2:1, (Spring, 1998), p. 43-61; Doyle, David Noel, The Irish as Urban Pioneers in the United States, *Journal of American Ethnic History*, Vol. 10, No 1/2, The Irish in America (Fall, 1990 – Winter, 1991), p. 49

<sup>359</sup> Emmons, David M., *Beyond The American Pale The Irish In The West 1845-1910*, (Oklahoma, 2010), Introduction.

<sup>360</sup> Doyle, ‘The Irish in North America, 1776-1845’ in *Making the Irish American: The History & Heritage of the Irish in the United States*, (ed.) J.J. Lee and Marion R. Casey, p.181

<sup>361</sup> Bric, Maurice J., Ireland and the Atlantic World, 1690-1840 in *The Oxford Handbook of Modern Irish History*, (ed.) Alvin Jackson, (Oxford, 2014), p.470; Thomas F. Meehan, Catholic Literary New York, 1800-1840, *The Catholic Historical Review* Vol. 4, No. 4 (Jan., 1919), pp 401-2

Nassau William Senior and George Nicholl that emigration was a general panacea.<sup>362</sup> O'Connell's plan was to send land scouts from Dublin to the Mid-West to purchase land in Ohio, Indiana, Illinois and Wisconsin. Each settlement was to consist of enough land to afford a settler a farm of eighty acres; each colony was to have at least one hundred families, its own priest, church and school. The scheme was to be funded by the sale of stock certificates with the profits divided between the Dublin Society and the established colony for the purpose of building roads, bridges, schools and other public buildings. The plan was abruptly dropped in 1845 with no explanation given but according to Shannon the answer to the sudden demise of the plan must lie with the political landscape of Ireland at that time as American opinion was united in support of immigration schemes and Bishop Hughes of New York had not yet undertaken any quarrel with western colonizers.<sup>363</sup>

The death of O'Connell and the rise of the Young Ireland movement which opposed assisted emigration as a cure for poverty in Ireland saw the end of O'Connell's emigration plan. However, not all Young Irelanders opposed assisted emigration, Thomas D'Arcy McGee, who advocated emigration to alleviate poverty, left Ireland for the U.S. in 1848 following the unsuccessful Young Ireland rebellion. According to Shannon it was McGee's energy that was the driving force responsible for an abortive but historically important colonization meeting, the Irish Immigrant Aid Convention, which met in Dudley Hall, Buffalo, New York, on 12 February 1856.<sup>364</sup> It was further under the guidance of Bishop Grace that the Minnesota Emigration Society was incorporated in St. Paul in 1864 with John Ireland named as president and Dillon O'Brien appointed secretary. In St Paul, Bishop Grace had succeeded Bishop Loras who had corresponded with the Irish Emigration Society in New York in the 1840s. Between 1839 and 1850 when land and town lots could be easily secured Loras bought sites for churches, schools and convents which served as nuclei for parishes. Loras sent articles to the *Boston Pilot*, the *New York Freeman's Journal* and to European papers. As Bishop of Dubuque, Loras founded settlements in Iowa, Southern Minnesota and Nebraska.<sup>365</sup> In 1856 Loras sent Father Jeremiah Treacy to McGee's colonization convention in Buffalo and the following year Loras commissioned Treacy to undertake a series of lectures to Catholics in eastern cities.

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<sup>362</sup> Doyle, 'The Irish in North America, 1776-1845', in Joseph Lee, Marion R Casey, *Making the Irish American: history and heritage of the Irish in the United States*, p. 186

<sup>363</sup> Shannon, James P., *Catholic Colonisation on the Western Frontier*, (New Haven and London, 1957), pp 16-18

<sup>364</sup> Shannon, *Catholic Colonisation on the Western Frontier*, (New Haven and London, 1957), p.19

<sup>365</sup> Moynihan, Humphrey, Archbishop Ireland's Colonies, in *Acta Et Dicta*, October 1934, p.214

It was at one of these lectures in the Broadway Tabernacle auditorium in New York City that Archbishop John Hughes in dramatic fashion denounced the migration of Irish immigrants from the east to the west. Treacy made no more appeals in the Archdiocese of New York and, to the detriment of so many destitute Irish, Archbishop Hughes remained opposed to western settlements for the last decade of his life. Hughes's opposition to colonization derived from the fact that he had no sympathy for many of the leaders of the Young Ireland movement in Ireland of which D'Arcy McGee was one. Archbishop Hughes did not succeed in halting colonization completely as by the late 1850s conversations about 'free land' were in the air. Newspaper and magazine articles debated the issues while high-powered salesmen for land companies and official agents of state governments told the public of the opportunities of the west. McGee's work did add further flames to a fire and in effect his colonisation concept removed the obstacle which prevented so many of the poorest from relocating which was the fear of the loss of their faith. Catholic colonies which placed Catholics side by side with one another alongside a Catholic church removed the concern Catholics had of being marginalised. Large numbers of Catholics who came to the United States in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries lost their faith because they settled in places with no priest or church. The loss of faith in the sporadic settlement of Catholics was frequently contrasted with two Catholic settlements in Maryland and Kentucky in which Catholics remained together. These two settlements stood out in the Catholic mind as an example of what Catholic settlements could be.

Although Archbishop Hughes made great efforts to discourage Irish families from heading west he did not prevent Father Treacy and others from continuing with efforts to relocate Irish migrants. In 1855 under the leadership of Bishop Loras of Dubuque, Treacy secured land for a Catholic Colony in Dakota County in north-eastern Nebraska and the following spring settlers made their way to the new colony. Although the new settlers faced great difficulties only two families left the colony in the first ten years to avail of opportunities by the discovery of gold in Colorado. In 1876, Father Gallitzen formed a Catholic colony at Mount Loretto in Pennsylvania while the Irish Catholic Benevolent Association organised a colonisation society the following year and purchased land in Charlotte County, Virginia. In 1877, two coal miners, Patrick Hynes and Michael McCarthy went west to Nebraska from Pittston, Pennsylvania. They met with William Onahan and Bishop O'Connor who had established a Catholic colony in Greeley County, Nebraska.

Further in 1877 the Irish Catholic Benevolent Association of St. Louis organized a colonization society and purchased land in Pottawatomie County in Kansas.<sup>366</sup>

John Ireland and the Catholic Colonization Bureau were the most successful proponents of attracting migrants to Minnesota; however, they were not the only agency engaged in these efforts. General James Shields, statesman and entrepreneur was born in Tyrone in Ireland and had created a successful life in America. Shields was granted lands for his war service in the town site of Faribault and selective lands in Le Sueur and Rice counties in Minnesota in 1855. His lands became known as Shieldsville and Erin Townships and were the state's first established colony. Shields advertised through the pages of the Catholic press inviting Irish Catholics in search of homes to come to Minnesota. In 1856 St. Patrick's Church was erected at Shieldsville for the 460 Irish-born Catholics in the area and by 1879, 250 Catholic families mostly from the east coast had settled in and around Shieldsville at a cost of \$1.50 to \$2.00 an acre for farms of 80 to 160 acres. Colonists continued to arrive in Shieldsville, even though the available land had all been acquired, and it was these colonists who settled in the surrounding townships of Erin, Montgomery and Kilkenny.<sup>367</sup> Like Father Treacy, General Shields encountered vigorous opposition in the east especially from Archbishop Hughes of New York and under the strain of such opposition Shields never fulfilled the colonization dreams he once held but he did achieve concrete results with hundreds of industrious and wealthy farmers residing in the townships he created.<sup>368</sup> South-eastern Minnesota became the first major Irish concentration in the state along the Mississippi and Minnesota rivers.

By 1860 the number of Irish-born persons residing in Minnesota was 11,838 which was one fifth of the total foreign-born population. With those born of Irish parents the Irish accounted for 21,500 of the population which was one eighth of Minnesota's total population of 172,000.<sup>369</sup> By 1870 the south-east of Minnesota contained 72.5 per cent of Minnesota's Irish-born population. The majority of Irish were concentrated in about twenty counties with 58 per cent of those listed as employed as farm workers and owners.<sup>370</sup> Not all migrants were drawn to Minnesota as colonists, as noted earlier some arrived as lumbermen, canal men and

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<sup>366</sup> Moloney, D. M., *American Catholic Lay Groups and Transatlantic Social Reform in the Progressive Era*, (University of North Carolina, 2002), p. 86; O'Grady John, Irish Colonization in the United States, *Studies*, September 1930, pp 394-6, 398-401, 404

<sup>367</sup> *Star Tribune*, 17 March 1994; Moynihan, James H., *The Life of Archbishop John Ireland A Definitive Biography*, p. 22, Moynihan Humphrey, Archbishop Ireland's Colonies, in *Acta Et Dicta*, October 1934, p. 215

<sup>368</sup> O'Grady John, 'Irish Colonization in the United States', in *Studies*, September 1930, p. 401

<sup>369</sup> Regan, Ann, Irish in Minnesota, p.2; <http://www.census.gov/dmd/www/resapport/states/minnesota.pdf>

<sup>370</sup> Campbell, Malcolm, 'Immigrants on the Land: Irish Rural Settlement in Minnesota and New South Wales, 1830-1890', in *New Hibernia Review* 2:1, (Spring, 1998), p.50

as railroad workers. In 1880, 870 of railroad officials and employees were Irish, constituting six per cent of the total Irish labour force as well as 13.6 per cent of the state's railroad employees.<sup>371</sup>

## Conclusion

In all regions where the Irish settled, with the exception of Nova Scotia and Queensland, the native-born chose to settle in agricultural districts. Catholic Irish immigrants in their efforts to avoid host population domination settled in the districts which were disproportionately industrial and urban. However, in Australia the Irish did not find the rural economy closed to them. 'Their apparently greater readiness than other immigrant groups to settle in agricultural districts when opportunity arose, was doubtless due in part to their uniquely rural background'.<sup>372</sup> Irish-Americans often left behind an unusually backward rural economy only to find all but the squalid margins of American society open to them. But, Irish-Australians were unique in their ordinariness as they both left and settled in areas 'remarkable neither for backwardness nor industrialisation'. Irish immigrants were forced overseas by lack of employment opportunities in Ireland but for most immigrants who choose to leave for Australia they had only recently been driven to the margin and as such they hoped to retrieve such losses in their new homeland.<sup>373</sup> In America the Irish sought safety in numbers but in Australia the dispersion of Irish immigrants was remarkable even within major Australian cities. The wide diffusion of the Irish in Australia was matched by other immigrant groups all of whom profited by the scarcity and weakness of the native-born. In two respects Irish settlement in Australia was distinctive. The Irish settled where the English and Scottish did not and further they settled in the areas enclosing major towns unlike the native who settled within cities and other immigrants who settled in the outlying districts.<sup>374</sup>

Despite the hatred and marginalization of the Catholic Irish, by the early 1870s many began to rise above their destitution. The development of cheap transportation in the 1880s and 1890s offered escape to suburbia from working class slums while growing political influence offered psychological respectability.<sup>375</sup> Cohesion and civic loyalty to a host society

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<sup>371</sup> Regan, Ann, 'The Irish' in *They Chose Minnesota: A Survey of the State's Ethnic Groups* by June Drenning Holmquist, (St. Paul, 1981), p.142

<sup>372</sup> Fitzpatrick, Irish Emigration in the Later Nineteenth Century, *Irish Historical Studies*, Vol. 22, No. 86 (Sep., 1980), p. 135

<sup>373</sup> Fitzpatrick, Irish Emigration in the Later Nineteenth Century, *Irish Historical Studies*, Vol. 22, No. 86 (Sep., 1980), 137-8

<sup>374</sup> Fitzpatrick, Irish Emigration in the Later Nineteenth Century, *Irish Historical Studies*, Vol. 22, No. 86 (Sep., 1980), p.136

<sup>375</sup> Kirby A. Miller, *Emigrants and Exiles*, p.495

was secured by permitting diversity such as autonomous schooling, trade union community-building, and a consistent effort to use citizen rights. The positive achievements of the Irish are most evident in politics, charitable work and the institutional consolidation of the Irish middle-class abroad.<sup>376</sup>

In-so-far as it was important to outline the background of where Nugent's immigrants came from it is of further importance to understand the environment they arrived to. The Irish in America is a diverse study that offers as many insights as it does locations. It would appear that although similarities are found between regions it cannot be assumed that even within these regions, one size fits all. Nugent's immigrants must be viewed in this context, it remains to be discovered how the immigrants from the far west of Connemara and south Mayo fared in 1880 on the Minnesota prairie. A clearer picture can only emerge with an understanding of who these people were and what was the cultural and social environment they arrived to. Subsequent chapters will explore what happened to Nugent's immigrants upon arrival in Minnesota and in some cases, an examination of the descendants of Nugent's immigrants will outline what happened to the families in the years that followed.

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<sup>376</sup> Doyle, David Noel, Cohesion and Diversity in the Irish Diaspora, *Irish Historical Studies*, Vol. 31, No. 123 (May, 1999), pp 431-2



### Chapter 3: From Connemara to Graceville

On 23 June 1880 the *S.S. Austrian* of Glasgow owned by the Allen Line Shipping Company arrived in Boston from Galway with Reginald Barrett as Master. Barrett travelled with 419 passengers and six Galway stowaways.<sup>377</sup> Among the passengers were a number of families identified from the departure ports of Glasgow, Moville and Galway; 80 per cent of the passengers boarded at Galway with the majority of them identified as Nugent's emigrants. The emigration officer, Captain Kiddle, and Dr Rice on behalf of the Board of Trade inspected the passengers to ensure they were in a fit condition to undertake the voyage.<sup>378</sup> James Nugent had worked with Liverpool's most destitute. At the age of 24 Nugent was ordained and began working in his native city of Liverpool during the Irish Famine crisis. In 1880 Nugent responded to the impending famine that threatened the poorest in Ireland who lived in the most westerly regions of Connemara. Nugent along with a network of individuals, all of whom were linked through various shared interests, came together to assist and formulate a plan which had been conceived decades earlier but that had not been considered in the west of Ireland. The individuals who travelled to Graceville are of the primary focus to this study and are listed in figure 1. However, those who initiated the scheme and their relationships with other like-minded individuals are also of great interest. The protagonists, a number of who were Irish-born, shared interests, which included the welfare of the poorest in Ireland and the Irish in America. The emigrants who were assisted by Nugent are examined in greater detail in subsequent chapters. This chapter will focus on those who supported the transatlantic shift of families and small community groups and how those who supported and initiated the schemes were received in the west of Ireland.

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<sup>377</sup> Irish Genealogical Society of Minnesota holds a copy of the Austrian passenger list prepared by Norman Patterson who held a lifelong interest in Nugent's immigrants and who provided a copy of the same list to the author. Patterson's unpublished collection of documents is titled *The Connemara Irish Settlement of Graceville, Minnesota in 1880*. <http://www.sec.state.ma.us/arc/arcsrch/PassengerManifestSearchContents.html> provides passenger manifestos from 1848 to 1891 of some of the more than one million immigrants who disembarked at Boston. The Archives holds the original of these passenger manifestos, HS3.02/1990X (Registers of passengers arriving in Massachusetts ports) of the Massachusetts Archives. The six stowaways were; Pat Caneley 24, Teddy Mulcairn 26, Michael Coman 32, John Oliver 28, Hugh Riley 26 and Tom Finnegan 25

<sup>378</sup> *The Galway Express*, 5 June 1880

## The Protagonists

John Ireland, William J. Onahan, Dillon O'Brien, John Sweetman

John Ireland was born in Kilkenny and immigrated to Minnesota in his youth. Ireland was educated at the preparatory seminary of Meximieux in France and was ordained in 1861 in St. Paul. He also served as chaplain of the Fifth Minnesota Regiment in the Civil War. Working as a Catholic priest, Ireland recognised the need to improve the conditions of his fellow Irish, many of who lived in slums in the cities along the east coast of America. By 1880 Ireland was coadjutor Bishop of St. Paul and had established Catholic colonies on prairie lands in Minnesota with the help of railway companies. A friendship existed between Ireland and Nugent which began before 1880; Nugent was a frequent visitor to St. Paul where his sister had emigrated to. Ireland and Nugent's shared common interests included improving the conditions of impoverished Irish and the efforts of the temperance movement.

William J. Onahan was a prominent business man and a Chicago politician. Onahan was also born in Ireland and had spent his formative years in Ireland and Liverpool. In Liverpool, he served mass at St. Matthew's church along with James Nugent but in later life become more familiar with Nugent as a colleague through their shared interest in improving the conditions of impoverished Irish. Onahan immigrated to New York and in 1854 he relocated to Chicago where he joined the Catholic Institute. Along with Bishops Ireland, Spalding and Riordan and a number of Catholic laymen, Onahan established the Irish Catholic Colonization Association in 1879 and was appointed secretary of the organisation.

Dillon O'Brien was an Irish native who had left Ireland after his wealth had diminished considerably during the 1840s. After two or three years in Detroit, O'Brien and his family were placed in charge of a Catholic Chippewa school on Madeline Island in Wisconsin. In 1863 O'Brien moved to Minnesota and met with John Ireland who had returned from his service as chaplain to the Fifth Minnesota Regiment during the civil war. The two men became trusted companions and two years later O'Brien became the editor of the *Northwestern Chronicle* a weekly Catholic publication. O'Brien was not only recognised for

his immigration efforts alongside John Ireland, but in 1879 he was appointed to the Immigration Board established by the Minnesota Legislature.

John Sweetman was a wealthy landowner from county Meath who visited Minnesota in 1880. Sweetman was one of the founding members of the Land League but disapproved of the methods of the more militant Michael Davitt and left the organisation. It was Sweetman's commitment to his tenants and his ideological views of tenant proprietorship which brought him on an exploratory journey to Minnesota. In April 1880, Sweetman presented a letter of introduction to John Ireland from Archbishop McCabe of Dublin. Edward McCabe was born in Dublin in 1816 he was appointed archbishop of Dublin in 1879 at the same time when the agriculture distress of the west became apparent. He sympathised with the distressed farmers and allowed collections in aid of the distress at church doors in his diocese. Similar to the views of Sweetman, McCabe was opposed to the violence associated with land agitation and would not allow Dublin diocesan priest to take part in Land League activities. He further wrote several pastoral letters denouncing the movement. McCabe's introduction of Sweetman and John Ireland was the beginning of a long relationship between both men. Ireland outlined to Sweetman the danger Irish immigrants faced in large cities. According to Sweetman, John Ireland believed the Irish were better off starving in Ireland as opposed to being corrupted by vice in the cities of the east coast.<sup>379</sup>

The experience, influence and knowledge that men such as Ireland, Onahan, O'Brien and Sweetman brought to bear, was instrumental to the success of planting the American mid-west with Catholic Irish. The credibility of Nugent's scheme is recognised by the willingness and support these men provided. John Ireland supported Nugent in this particular effort, Dillon O'Brien worked alongside John Ireland for years in Minnesota while James Onahan worked with a number of leading prelates advocating Catholic settlements for impoverished Irish immigrants. In further recognition of Ireland's and Nugent's scheme, John Sweetman provided personal funding to replicate their efforts. James Hack Tuke would correspond with Sweetman in the 1880s seeking advice and recommendations on how to transfer many thousands of immigrants from Ireland to America.

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<sup>379</sup> Sweetman, John, The Sweetman Catholic Colony of Currie, Minnesota: A Memoir, in *Acta Et Dicta*, Vol. III No. 1 (July, 1911), p. 46; *Irish-American Colonization Company Records*, Minnesota Historical Society, P2375 142.F.15.7B

Fig 1: Nugent's immigrants identified by shipping list of the *S.S. Austrian*, 23 June 1880. The families travelled from Carna, Carraroe, Killeen and Spiddal in county Galway and Aughagower in county Mayo.<sup>380</sup>

	<b>Head of Family/Age</b>	<b>Occupation</b>	<b>Family Members/Age</b>
1	Bourke Coleman, 45	Labourer	Margaret 40, Honor 18, Barbara 16, Mary 14, Margaret 11, Annie 10, Bridget 7, Patrick 6, Honor 4, Coleman 1
2	Bourke William, 40	Labourer	Bridget 40, John 18, Edward 14, Bridget 6, Barbara 4, Mary 1
3	Burke Austin, 50	Labourer	Mary Heneghan 40, John 7, Peggy 25
4	Cirvan Thomas, 45	Labourer	Bridget 45, Patrick 20, Honor 22, Margaret 17, Sarah 15, Barbara 11, John 7
5	Conway Thomas, 50	Farmer	Mary 45, Thomas 18, John 16, Bridget 14, Catherine 8, Margaret 7
6	Cooney James, 56	Farmer	Mrs Cooney 50, Patrick 25, Bridget 23, John 21, Mary 4
7	Coyne Anthony, 41	Farmer	Mrs. Coyne 40, Coleman 20, Mary 18, Kathleen 15, Patrick 13, Barbara 8, Bartholomew 7, Anthony 6, Margaret 3, Bridget inf
8	Coyne John, 39	Farmer	Margaret 34, Patrick 14, Kate 11, Honoria 10, Bridget 8, John 6, Anne 4, Peter 3, Teresa inf
9	Curran Michael, 47	Labourer	Anne 45, Thomas 23, William K. 21, Martin 19, Stephen 15, Bridget 17, Patrick 11
10	Flaherty Barth, 60	Farmer	Mrs. Flaherty 48, Bridget 25, John 23, Patrick 21, Ann 19, Barbara 17, Ellen 15, Matthias 13
11	Flaherty Cath, 35	Matron	Mary 14, Kealy 7, Julia 5, Patrick 3, Dolen 1
12	Flaherty Latorerie, 40	Farmer	Mary 45, James 20, Sarah 16, Martin 14, Patrick 11, Maria 8, Latorerie 5, John 7, Bridget inf
13	Flaherty Michael, 46	Farmer	Mrs. Flaherty 45, Michael 20, Patrick 18, Peter 16, Sally 14, Bartholomew 8, Cicely 7
14	Flaherty Patrick, 50	Farmer	Mrs. Flaherty 45, Mary 22, Redmond 20, Martin 17, Patrick 15, Peter 12,

<sup>380</sup> *The Nation*, 19 June 1880, p.6; W.J. Onahan report as secretary of the Irish Catholic Colonisation Association dated 18 June 1880 included Spiddal, in the *Helen Angela Hurley compilation in the John Ireland Collection, section 1, notes and citations 1838-1889, of the Minnesota Historical Society's Manuscript Collection, CBA.165 Box 1*

			Margaret 7
15	Folan John, 56	Farmer	Mrs. Folan 56, Michael 32, Stephen 27, Roger 20, James 17
16	Gallagher John, 45	Labourer	Annie Lavelle (matron) 40, Edward 18, Michael 16, Mary C. 8, Anthony 7, Patrick 4
17	Garco Michael, 45	Labourer	Winifred 45, Mary 20, Coleman 18, Cath 16, Michael 14, Bridget 11, Margaret 7, Stephen 6, Barbara 4, Annie 1
18	Grealish John, 45	Labourer	Bridget 45, Margt 21, Bridget 19, Honor 15, Margt 13, Sarah 10, John 7, Patrick 5, Julia 3, Nanny 1
19	Green Thomas, 40	Labourer	Barbara 38, Mary 18, Patrick 14, Bridget 11, Mary 10, John 7, Coleman 4, Honor 2
20	King Martin, 35	Labourer	Mary 35, John 16, Mary 13, Margaret 10, Barbara 7, Helen 5, Honor 19
21	McDonagh Barth, 55	Farmer	Mrs. McDonagh 45, Andrew 19, Mary 17, Dudley 15, Coleman 13, Matthias 8, Bridget 6, Barbara 5, Anthony 7
22	McDonagh Coleman, 40	Farmer	Mrs. McDonagh 40, Patrick 16, Mary 13, James 8, Tally 7, Martin 4
23	McDonagh Myles, 26	Farmer	Mrs. McDonagh 27, Redmond 4, Patrick 2, Ann inf
24	McDonnell Dennis, 45	Labourer	Mary Quin(Wife) 40, Mary Brody (spinster) 22, James Brody 21, Annie Brody (spinster) 19, Winifred Brody (spinster) 17, Bridget Brody 11, John Brody 8, James Brody 7, Ellen Brody 4, John Brody 1, James McDonald (labourer) 19
25	McDonough Barth, 41	Farmer	Mrs. McDonough 40, Bridget 16, Ann 14, Margaret 12, Coleman 7, Mary 4, Patrick inf
26	McDonough Matthew, 42	Farmer	Mary 32, Bridget 8, John 5, Daniel 25,
27	McLine Anthony, 55	Farmer	Mrs. McLine 53, Barth 21, Patrick 19, John 17, Mary 8
28	Nee Testy, 40	Farmer	Mary 30, Bridget 17, Mary 15, Michael 13, Patrick 8, Catherine 6, Martin 4, Testy inf
29	Nee Thomas, 41	Farmer	Ann 39, Michael 21, Catherine 19, Mary 15, Thomas 11, John 8,

			Margaret 7, Honor 4
30	O'Brien James, 45	Farmer	Mrs. O'Brien 38, Barbara 20, Patrick 17, Peter 15, Martin 13, Ann 8, Stephen 7, James 6
31	O'Molloy Edward, 45	Labourer	Mary 40, Michael 20, Valentine 18, Sarah 16, Mary 14, Honor 11, Bridget 7
32	Ready Austin, 52	Labourer	Mary Walsh (wife) 39, John 18, James 19, Bridget 16, Patrick 13, Thomas 8, Mary 7, Catherine 1
33	Rourke John, 45	Labourer	Margaret 40, Coleman 20, Bridget 18, John J. 16, Thomas 14, Borthy 4, Stephen 4, Edward 1, Patrick 11
34	Slanton Patrick, 40	Farmer	Honor 35, Bridget 15, John 13, Mary 11, Phillip 8, Ellen 4, Michael 5, Patrick 4
35	Wood John J., 36	Farmer	Mary J. 34, Mary G. 11, Anthony 8, William K. 6, Ignatius 3, Mary T. Duffy, 24

## Selecting Nugent's Emigrants

### Why Nugent chose the families he did from Connemara and South Mayo

The group of immigrants were fortunate to have been selected to leave the west of Ireland in 1880 where the economy had collapsed because of potato failure and the loss of income from migratory wages. The families were selected from districts which were the most destitute, where communities had continued to live a pre-famine existence at constant risk of starvation when crops failed. Poor seasons from 1877 to 1879 resulted in the loss of the equivalent of £20 million pounds worth of potatoes. The potato crop of 1879 was valued at £3.3 million compared to the annual average value in the early 1870s of £9.25 million.<sup>381</sup> With no food available and no cash to purchase food it was charitable organisations and the Land League who provided funding and Indian meal. Major Gaskell reported to the Mansion House Committee in April 1880 that he had visited Carna and Ballinakill where he had spoken with Father Flaherty who had 600 families on his lists in need of relief. The

<sup>381</sup> The Irish Crisis of 1879-80. General Report. Proceedings of the Dublin Mansion House Relief Committee 1880. Dublin, 1881, p.3

population was very poor and 460 families were in need of immediate assistance.<sup>382</sup> In Mayo at the Cappaduff dispensary in Ballinrobe Dr. Hanrahan reported cases of debility among the elderly and the young attributable in his opinion to ‘insufficient nourishment’; the doctor stated he had never seen such poverty and wretchedness. ‘Women and children are barely clad, and there is an entire absence of bedding and blankets. Everything that would raise money for food had been pawned. For want of clothes the attendance at schools has fallen off’.<sup>383</sup>

Among the first to raise concerns in England regarding the destitution of the people of the west of Ireland were the Catholic clergy. In December 1879 a letter from Cardinal Manning was read at Sunday services in the Catholic churches of Westminster: ‘his Eminence learns that much hunger, poverty, and want as now exist in the West of Ireland as have been unknown since the fatal famine of ‘47’.<sup>384</sup> People were further alerted to the crisis in Carna by Father Patrick Grealy when he wrote to a number of newspapers in January 1880 detailing the extent of the poverty of the district.<sup>385</sup> Grealy further wrote to James Nugent in Liverpool: ‘this locality is not fit for human habitation. No more than a third of the present population could live in any sort of comfort on the land’.<sup>386</sup> It must be noted that the ten families who were chosen to emigrate from Carna in 1880 were accompanied to Galway by Patrick Grealy. This initial contact may have been the beginning of an affiliation whereby Grealy showed himself to be supportive of plans to assist families to leave. It must be remembered that by the 1880s the practice of reducing the number of tenants on the land so those who remained had greater opportunities had been in place for a number of decades. The Liverpool Irish Relief Committee was one of the first agencies to respond to Grealy’s letter and in turn the Liverpool committee sent Nugent with a party of five to aid the situation by distributing seed potatoes and contributions collected in Liverpool. The delegation

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<sup>382</sup> *Freemans Journal*, 2 April, 1880 p.7

<sup>383</sup> *Freemans Journal*, 2 April, 1880 p.7

<sup>384</sup> *Weekly Irish Times*, 6 December, 1879, p. 4

<sup>385</sup> Moran, Gerard, “In Search of the Promised Land”, *The Connemara Colonization Scheme to Minnesota, 1880*, in *Eire/Ireland*, vol. xxxi (Autumn/Winter, 1996) p. 135; *Connaught Telegraph* 3 January 1880; *Nation* 10 January 1880.

<sup>386</sup> *The Clinton Courier*, 1 July, 1880, p.1; J. H. Moynihan, Archbishop Ireland’s Colonies, in *Acta et Dicta*, 6:21 (October, 1934) p.221

consisted of Nugent, Reverend Canon Trench and four representatives of the merchant classes of Liverpool.<sup>387</sup>

On 30 January 1880, Nugent along with Reverend Canon Trench and J.J. Briscoe went as a deputation to the Lord Mayor and the members of the Mansion House Committee to inquire as to the best way to distribute the funds which had been collected in Liverpool. The delegation had already collected five or six thousand pounds and more funding was due from Liverpool's neighbouring towns of St. Helens and Birkenhead. Nugent stated the Liverpool delegation had come to listen to the suggestions of the committee because the people of Liverpool would not confine the extent of their generosity to £10,000 or £20,000. Statements by Nugent at this stage indicate his willingness to work with others. Nugent's experience of working with state structures and fundraising for capital projects taught him the prerequisite skills required to engage influential people. With respect to the Liverpool delegation the Lord Mayor convened a special meeting and outlined the structure of the Mansion House Committee and the local county committees. The committee boards at all levels were required to have Catholic and Protestant bishops as members along with members of parliament and dispensary medical officers.

A committee from the Mansion House Committee members was established to confer with the Liverpool delegation which included George Woods Mannsell D.L., G. Browne M.P., Alderman Purdon and V.B. Dillon.<sup>388</sup> The Liverpool committee decided to focus their efforts on three parts of Ireland; the west, the north-west and the south-west. Before departing the delegation inquired if starvation was imminent to which the Lord Mayor responded, 'not merely was there impending starvation but people were starving at the present time'. Nugent and Hugh L. Smyth arrived in Galway the following day and spent the next twelve days visiting twenty-two locations in Galway and Mayo.<sup>389</sup> While in Connemara Nugent sent reports to the Liverpool Relief Committee and the Government on the state of the poor. Furnival states Nugent concentrated on the barren areas of the west, Connemara and Sligo, and highlighted the situation of the worst off and those barely able to survive.

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<sup>387</sup> *The Irish Times*, 30 January, 1880, p.6

<sup>388</sup> *The Irish Times*, 30 January, 1880, p.6

<sup>389</sup> Moran, Gerard, "In Search of the Promised Land", *The Connemara Colonization Scheme to Minnesota*, 1880, in *Eire/Ireland*, vol. xxxi (Autumn/Winter, 1996) p. 135; Edward K. Bennett, *Father Nugent of Liverpool* (Liverpool, 1949), p. 101; Shannon, J.P., "Bishop Ireland's Connemara Experiment", *Minnesota History* 35:5, (March, 1957), p.206



Nugent called for the purchase of seed potatoes along with improved distribution. He also advocated the construction of harbour walls and sea defences to protect the fishing industry which was essential for the people of the districts to survive.<sup>390</sup>

With the distress of the famine apparent in county Mayo, Nugent's companion, Hugh L. Smyth donated £20 to Revd. M. Clesham. However, rather than the donation being graciously welcomed for the poor of Mayo it caused grave concern to Father Stephens of Aughagower. Nugent's delegation included both Catholics and Protestants who were accustomed to working and assisting one another. The determined zeal of the Connemara Evangelists had not been replicated in Liverpool or any English city where it was unnecessary to convert Protestants. Smyth's donation to Clesham alarmed Stephens not only because Clesham's school engaged in conversions but also because the need, according to Stephens, was greater in Catholic communities. Stephens raised his concerns directly with Nugent and accepted Nugent could not be held to account for an individual donating his personal money. In writing his complaint it was clear Stephens wished to see the mission school gain no advantage and requested the donation be considered when future grants from the Mansion House were allocated.<sup>391</sup>

The letter from Stephens places Nugent in Aughagower which was another one of the districts that five families were chosen to leave from.<sup>392</sup> Furthermore, Stephens's letter provides an indication as to why Catholic priests assisted Nugent in his effort to remove people from these areas. The clergy feared destitution would result in successful efforts to proselytize the Catholic population. The Famine of the 1840s had provided a breeding ground for evangelical Protestant groups and, the longer the hardship continued the more vulnerable the Catholic population was. In a further letter on the 19 February, Stephens continued to raise his concerns regarding Clesham who according to Stephens had become a 'pious proselyte' in his teenage years. Clesham had 'abandoned the old church and its errors and his old widowed mother and her superstitious habit of going to mass on Sundays'.<sup>393</sup> Stephens further stated, 'I have the highest esteem for honest bona fide protestants, many of whom I am glad to account among my protestant friends; but these soup-made comments "quorum

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<sup>390</sup> Furnival, John, *Children of the Second Spring Father James Nugent and the Work of Child Care in Liverpool*, (England, 2005), p.198

<sup>391</sup> Letter from J.E. Stephens, Honouree Secretary of the Westport Relief Committee, 11 April 1880, (DCA, Mansion House relief fund Aughagower, Co. Mayo Ch1/52/67)

<sup>392</sup> *The Nation*, 19 June 1880, p.6

<sup>393</sup> Letter from J.E. Stephens, Honouree Secretary of the Westport Relief Committee to the Mansion House Committee, 19 February 1880, (DCA, Mansion House relief fund Aughagower, Co. Mayo Ch1/52/67)

Deus venter est” I have never been able to admire’.<sup>394</sup> Stephens’s statement would appear to be consistent with the opinion of many of the Catholic clergy of Connemara in the 1880s in that it was not Protestants who were distrusted and disliked but only evangelical Protestants who insisted on demeaning the Catholic faith.

Revd. Clesham was living in the region in 1880 but according to Stephens he had only arrived when the crisis began. Clesham, a steadfast Protestant from Ballyconree, Clifden, had refused to return to Rome following an illness when his parents had him anointed. Contrary to Stephens claim that Clesham’s mother was Catholic, *The Banner* stated Clesham’s parents converted in 1875.<sup>395</sup> In 1880, Clesham was chairman of the Ashlea Committee and Minister of the Irish Church Mission Society. Clesham’s reputation as a committed reformer was not dismissed by Stephens, for in his letter to the Mansion House he stated, ‘his congregation here it is true is small for the present but it will not be long so, for he is looking carefully after the school’.<sup>396</sup> Stephens accused Clesham of providing presents of clothes to those who attended his school. In writing to the Mansion House Committee on 23 February a number of weeks following his initial complaint, Stephens claimed Clesham’s congregation ‘do not want relief while he has at his door Catholic poor who would be glad to be relieved on condition of sending their little ones to the jumper school. And I fear they may be relieved on this condition expressed or implied’.<sup>397</sup>

Although Stephens had initially raised the issue of Smyth’s donation with Nugent he remained determined to highlight the perceived advantage granted to those who he had resolutely decided did not need support while at the same time deprived Catholics in great need. On the 23 February he wrote; ‘of this £20 not one penny nor penny’s worth was ever given to any Catholic in this parish save to one man who alone sends his children to Mr Clesham’s jumper school. This me thinks is a significant fact, a strange coincidence that may serve to show how the wind blows’.<sup>398</sup> Stephens could only have been aware of the impact an accusation that contributions were not being applied solely for the relief of the poor when he added ‘no earthly consideration could induce me to hold my peace were I to see funds contributed for the relief of God’s poor squandered directly or indirectly in proselytising our

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<sup>394</sup> Ibid., ‘quorum Deus venter est’ translated from Latin to English, ‘Their God is their stomach’.

<sup>395</sup> Moffitt, Miriam Soupers & Jumpers The Protestant Missions in Connemara 1848-1937, p.122; *Banner*, July 1875, p.41; October 1875, pp 57-59

<sup>396</sup> Ibid.

<sup>397</sup> Letter from J.E. Stephens, Honouree Secretary of the Westport Relief Committee to the Mansion House Committee, 23 February 1880, (DCA, Mansion House relief fund Aughagower, Co. Mayo Ch1/52/67)

<sup>398</sup> Letter from J.E. Stephens, Honouree Secretary of the Westport Relief Committee to the Mansion House Committee, 23 February 1880, (DCA, Mansion House relief fund Aughagower, Co. Mayo Ch1/52/67)

people'.<sup>399</sup> Stephens's complaints to the Mansion House ran the risk of bringing the relief efforts of the Liverpool committee into disrepute, a point that could not have been dismissed by Nugent. Furthermore, Nugent could not afford to alienate the Catholic clergy and in particular the clergy of Connemara who were a fundamental feature of a community where distrust of state institutions and aid agencies was embedded in the generations who survived the Famine.

While in the west, Nugent and Smyth visited the distressed districts of Killeen, Clifden, and Carna along with visiting the principal islands. Once more it must be noted the three areas of the mainland were areas where people emigrated from in 1880. In the very best of times the densely populated districts of Carraroe and Knock as well as the Islands could not support their inhabitants.<sup>400</sup> Nugent was familiar with the clergy of Connemara as from early 1880 Catholic priests had made every effort to contact those who they felt could support families to emigrate. In June 1881, Vere Foster stated that upwards of five hundred priests representing nearly three hundred parishes in the west of Ireland had written to him since the onset of the crisis. They pleaded with him to assist with the cost of emigration to where he described was the 'greater Ireland of America'. Catholic priests wrote to the press and became recognisable advocates of the most destitute. James Nugent was further familiar with the Catholic priests of the west too as *The Galway Express* noted that he had been 'in the habit of visiting Connemara yearly for many years back'.<sup>401</sup>

Although concerns about proselytising in Carna are not apparent and were not raised in Grealy's correspondence the same could not be said with regard to Clifden. As early as 1848 missions were established at Clifden and the surrounding districts of Fakeragh, Ballyconree, Errislannan and Sellerna. However, even earlier in the 1830s efforts had been made to preach the 'word of Life to the Poor Roman Catholic multitude' at Roundstone and Ballinakill.<sup>402</sup> The Franciscan monasteries at Clifden and Roundstone were founded in the 1830s in an effort to counteract the Protestant missionaries' influence. Clifden could be considered the beating heart of mission work in Connemara as it was the sons of John D'Arcy the founder of Clifden who advocated and engaged in missionary work and it was on their lands and on Captain Blake's lands at Castlekerke, twenty miles from Clifden that the first missions were established in Connemara.<sup>403</sup>

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<sup>399</sup> Ibid.

<sup>400</sup> *The Irish Times*, 24 May, 1880, p.7

<sup>401</sup> *The Galway Vindicator and Connaught Advertiser* 29 June 1881; *The Galway Express*, 5 June 1880

<sup>402</sup> Moffitt, Miriam, 'Soupers and Jumpers' the Protestant Missions in Connemara 1848-1937, pp 11-12

<sup>403</sup> Ibid., pp 21-22

The dire circumstances of Carna were magnified by lack of communication and the lack of public works. In one letter to the Mansion House Committee, Grealy outlined the difficulty of being instructed to seek aid from a central Connemara Committee and subsequently discovering no such committee existed. Frustrated, on 2 February Grealy wrote, 'we applied over and over again and failed to discover any such body. We communicated the result of our research to this Dublin Committee twice and still they adhere to their resolve even at the risk of allowing poor people perish'.<sup>404</sup> Grealy had to use a small fund he had collected for the purpose of building a new church at Kilkieran for distressed victims in that same district. According to Grealy, Kilkieran was the only parish in Connemara where there was 'no sort of employment given and it is the part that is least known and consequently has got but very little relief'.<sup>405</sup> From Clifden on 3 February the local committee wrote to the Mansion House Committee and stated, 'we are in an awful way here – the streets of the town are crowded with people wailing and fainting from downright hunger'.<sup>406</sup>

When Nugent returned to Liverpool he continued to appeal for funds. On 16 February a meeting was held at the Liverpool Town Hall presided over by the Mayor. A ladies' committee was formed to provide clothing for the women and children of the distressed districts of Ireland. Nugent gave an account of his recent visit and stated he and his fellow delegates wished to bear testimony to the activity of the committees in Dublin 'who had fenced off what must otherwise have reduced the country to a state of famine'. The total amount raised in Liverpool was £7,760 of which £600 was used to purchase seed potatoes for families in the south west while £1,600 was used to spend on seed potatoes for those in the west.<sup>407</sup> According to Moran, Nugent and Smyth returned to Ireland and distributed additional subscriptions which had been collected from Liverpool's large Irish population. In Nugent's report to the Liverpool Relief Committee in February he recommended emigration as the 'initial step' required for any improvement in the condition of those in the west of Ireland.<sup>408</sup> Nugent's approach to emigration as a solution to the destitution was not based on any emotional response to the fraught situation of the west of Ireland but instead it was a

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<sup>404</sup> Letter from Father Patrick Grealy of the Carna Committee to Mansion House Committee, 2 February 1880, (DCA, Mansion House relief fund Carna, Ch1/52/67)

<sup>405</sup> Ibid.

<sup>406</sup> Letter from the Clifden Committee to Mansion House Committee, 3 February 1880, (DCA, Mansion House relief fund Clifden, Ch 1/52/424)

<sup>407</sup> *The Irish Times*, 17 February, 1880, p.2

<sup>408</sup> *The Nation*, 6 March 1880, p.8

practical response which had been applied by Nugent on previous occasions. It was Nugent's lifelong experience of assisting the poor and underprivileged in Liverpool along with his first hand knowledge of the success of the poorest in North America which provided Nugent the impetus to consider assisting whole families to emigrate.

### **The Emigrants' Primary Protagonist - James Nugent**

James Nugent, a native of Liverpool was born in 1822 of an immigrant Irish father who set up his own business as an egg and fish dealer. Although Nugent grew up in a respectable middle class environment the poverty of the streets of Liverpool was unavoidable.<sup>409</sup> Nugent was educated at The Academy in Queen's Square, a Church of England private school. As Catholics were barred from receiving a university education this option was not available for Nugent and in 1838 he entered St. Cuthbert's College at Ushaw in county Durham having decided to enter the priesthood. In 1843 Nugent proceeded to the English College in Rome and after three years was called home and ordained at St. Nicholas' in August 1846.<sup>410</sup> Due to the small number of Catholic priests in England at this time, theological courses were made as short as requirements would permit. Nugent hastily returned to Liverpool from Rome to assist Catholic Famine immigrants who crowded into Lancashire towns.<sup>411</sup>

Nugent's involvement with the Famine Irish may have been the catalyst which directed him towards the causes of those he chose to represent all his life which were the poorest of Liverpool many of whom were Irish. The Famine of 1847 saw thousands of Irish flee Ireland for Liverpool; according to Bennett some three hundred thousand fugitives landed in Liverpool in that single year. The death rate increased 2,000 per cent from fever and in the Vauxhall ward one seventh of the population perished. It was estimated that overall nearly 100,000 died in Liverpool during the Famine years from fever, diarrhoea and dysentery with the strain on the Catholic Church evident by the loss of lives among Catholic priests.<sup>412</sup> The

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<sup>409</sup> Furnival, John, *Children of the Second Spring Father James Nugent and the Work of Child Care in Liverpool*, (England, 2005), pp 51-61

<sup>410</sup> Canon Bennett, *Father Nugent of Liverpool*, (England, 1849) p. 15; Furnival, John, *Children of the Second Spring Father James Nugent and the Work of Child Care in Liverpool*, (England, 2005), pp 71-73

<sup>411</sup> Untitled newspaper articles in William J. Onahan Papers. Archives of the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis.

<sup>412</sup> Canon Bennett, *Father Nugent of Liverpool*, (England, 1849) p.16

amount provided for Irish refugees in relief from poor rates was highest in Great Britain in Liverpool and Glasgow in 1847 where most Famine refugees fled to.<sup>413</sup>

In 1849 Nugent was appointed as curate to Father Worthy at St. Nicholas' of Copperate Hill and put in charge of the Boys' Guild. As a consequence of the Famine, hordes of homeless vagabond children roamed the streets of Liverpool, ragged barefoot and starving. With the assistance of a benefactor, Mrs Holmes, Nugent opened a ragged school in his first year to assist street children at Spiralfields between Dale Street and Whitechapel. On the streets of Liverpool crime and drunkenness occurred each night and it was not uncommon to witness young children huddled together in doorways.<sup>414</sup> Nugent had great compassion for the abandoned street children where, he stated, 'the girl scarce in her teens is degraded into a fallen outcast, the boy into a rowdy, duffer, thief and convict'.<sup>415</sup>

In 1864 Nugent, with the assistance of the Catholic Club which had been established to promote the works of Catholic charity and to defend Catholic interests politically set up a night shelter and refuge on Soho Street. Nugent estimated in 1864 alone there were 23,000 homeless children in Liverpool.<sup>416</sup> The Refuge obtained an Industrial Schools Certificate which allowed magistrates to commit children to institutions where they could be assisted. By 1867 the Refuge had thirty-one boys residing there on a permanent basis and provided 48,205 suppers along with 2,913 nights' lodgings for boys.<sup>417</sup> Nugent allowed all denominations to avail of the services the shelter provided and this approach not only endeared him greatly to the people of Liverpool but also provided him with greater access to benefactors who were required to keep the schools functioning. In 1869 Nugent established the Boys Refuge as a residential home which taught children trades. With more residing at the Refuge there was less room for the Day and Night School which was attended by the children of widows who, in an attempt to keep their children out of the workhouse, sent them to the school during the day. At night the school was used by the orphaned children who

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<sup>413</sup> The cost of assisting more than 47,000 people was £20,750 in Liverpool while in Glasgow the cost of assisting 32,000 people was £29,923. *Irish poor. Return of the number of Irish poor who have received relief out of the poor rates in London, Westminster, Mary-le-bone, Lambeth, Southwark, Tower Hamlets, Finsbury, Liverpool and Glasgow; and the money value of such relief.* HC 1847-48 (569), p.1

<sup>414</sup> The William J. Onahan Papers at the Archives of the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis, Minnesota

<sup>415</sup> Canon Bennett, *Father Nugent of Liverpool*, (England, 1849), p.30

<sup>416</sup> The William J. Onahan Papers at the Archives of the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis, Minnesota

<sup>417</sup> Canon Bennett, *Father Nugent of Liverpool*, (England, 1849), p.40

spent the day on the streets selling newspapers or shoe-blackening.<sup>418</sup> It was not only trades that were taught at the Refuge - a band comprised of Refuge boys which was held in high esteem in Liverpool was taken to Ireland to highlight the work of the Refuge on one occasion.<sup>419</sup>

Nugent's efforts were not solely confined to the poorest of the streets. In 1850 a year after his appointment at St. Nicholas's he opened a Catholic Middle school for boys. The school offered a commercial education along with religious instruction as well as evening classes. The school also had a library and a reading room and cost five guineas a year to attend.<sup>420</sup> The school was only the beginning for Nugent who set about establishing a Catholic Institute on Hope Street which opened in 1853 and was associated with the Oratory of St. Philip Neri Church. Nugent was director of the Institute until he was appointed chaplain to Walton Gaol ten years later.<sup>421</sup> Nugent's work was supported by the efforts of the Association of Providence which was the result of Nugent's collaboration with the Catholic Club. The Association of Providence recruited mostly from the younger professional and Catholic business class.<sup>422</sup>

The advantage which education provided children in their working lives was apparent to Nugent who campaigned vigorously for compulsory education. He further advanced his own education of the poor and his understanding of the relationship of poverty and crime in his role as chaplain of Walton Gaol which was one of England's largest prisons. Nugent held this post for twenty two years. In 1865 Nugent estimated that 66 per cent of Catholic male prisoners were labourers and for the most part Irish.<sup>423</sup> Nugent's desire to improve the condition of the poorest was not only confined to the young and to prisoners. Nugent held great sympathy for the women condemned for concealment of birth or infanticide and established a House of Providence and other homes where women could seek refuge.<sup>424</sup> Nugent did not support the incarceration of young children in prisons and with the support of Lord Gerard he established a Ship Reformatory to house young offenders in 1864.<sup>425</sup>

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<sup>418</sup> Canon Bennett, *Father Nugent of Liverpool*, (England, 1849), p.80

<sup>419</sup> The William J. Onahan Papers at the Archives of the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis, Minnesota

<sup>420</sup> Canon Bennett, *Father Nugent of Liverpool*, pp 16-23

<sup>421</sup> Canon Bennett, *Father Nugent of Liverpool*, pp 19 - 26

<sup>422</sup> Canon Bennett, *Father Nugent of Liverpool*, p.40

<sup>423</sup> Canon Bennett, *Father Nugent of Liverpool*, p.45

<sup>424</sup> *Death of Right Rev. Monsignor James Nugent*. Memoir. By the late Mgr. Nugent's Secretary in the William J. Onahan Papers. The Archives of the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis, Minnesota

<sup>425</sup> Canon Bennett, *Father Nugent of Liverpool*, p.54

Nugent's experience with emigration began in 1870 when he travelled to the United States and toured extensively. Nugent used the opportunity to present the case for 'Nobody's Children' a phrase he used to describe Liverpool's orphans. While in Minnesota Nugent took the opportunity to visit his brother who had immigrated there. No doubt it was this personal connection which drew Nugent to the mid-west and subsequent visits would have provided a curious mind with the opportunity to discover the colonisation efforts of John Ireland. Further in 1870 Nugent established a scheme for child emigration which was supported by Poor Law Guardians, magistrates and other child welfare advocates. One such advocate Dr Hayward pointed out to local authorities that the cost of providing for 2000 orphans was far greater than the cost of assisting children to immigrate to Canada. According to Hayward a saving of £5,000 a year could be made by assisting children to emigrate. Nugent's first scheme assisted twenty-four boys and an equal number of girls to travel to Montreal in Canada. They set sail on board the *S.S Austrian* in August 1870; this same ship would be used to transfer the immigrants from Connemara ten years later.<sup>426</sup>

Nugent was among the first proponents of schemes to send children to North America; others included Maria Susan Rye and Annie MacPherson. Rye was a social reformer who began assisting workhouse women to emigrate in the 1860s. Rye's and MacPherson's schemes of the 1870s included Catholics. Those chosen to emigrate had to spend months in homes established to train children in preparation for their new lives. The concern for Catholic street children, called street 'arabs', was essentially of a missionary character. In 1868-9 the guardians of two or three unions availed of Rye's assistance to send children to Canada but it was not until 1870 that the Poor Law Board sanctioned the emigration of pauper children under the care of Rye and MacPherson. By 1874 MacPherson had established homes in Liverpool, Edinburgh, Glasgow and Dublin where children resided prior to being sent to Canada.<sup>427</sup> A positive response was given by the Canadian authorities to the great number of children who were transferred to the Dominion. From the 1860s to the 1880s thousands of children were assisted to emigrate by Rye and MacPherson.

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<sup>426</sup> Canon Bennett, *Father Nugent of Liverpool*, p.95; Furnival, John, *Children of the Second Spring Father James Nugent and the Work of Child Care in Liverpool*, (England, 2005), pp 193-4

<sup>427</sup> *Pauper Children (Canada). Copy of a report to the right honourable the president of the Local Government Board, by Andrew Doyle, Esquire, local government inspector, as to the emigration of pauper children to Canada*, H.C. 1875 (9) LXIII pp 4,5



Although Nugent was a prominent proponent of assisting the poorest to emigrate, he was not the only official of the Catholic Church to send children: Cardinal Manning also supported a number of groups to emigrate from Westminster in the 1870s. Nugent travelled extensively throughout the United States and was known as an ‘outstanding authority on migration’, but nowhere did he receive such a welcome as he did in Minnesota, when, according to Bennett, in Nugent, John Ireland found a ‘kindred spirit’.<sup>428</sup> Nugent believed the western colonies had the potential to be the salvation for his indigent clients of the women’s shelter and for the many homeless children. According to Shannon when John Ireland began his work of colonization he immediately remembered the enthusiasm of his English friend and commissioned Nugent as his agent for emigration in England.<sup>429</sup> For Nugent, St. Paul became a second home as not only did his brother settle there but so did two of his sisters, Margaret Carter and Kate Latham. Many years later two of Nugent’s nieces celebrated their golden jubilee in religion at St. Joseph’s Academy in St. Paul. As such it seems St. Paul became very much a part of the extended Nugent family and it was a city Nugent returned to on many occasions. According to William J. Onahan, Nugent loved and admired Archbishop John Ireland ‘with an affection and sincerity that knew no abatement to the end’. He further described Nugent’s relationship with Minnesota’s state capital St. Paul: ‘through many years of his life St. Paul was the objective – the magnet that drew him to America. It was the motive and prompting of his frequent periodical visits’.<sup>430</sup>

Nugent diligently plied his message of social solidarity and the improvement of lives through emigration in the pages of *The Catholic Times* which he established in 1872. The newspaper had been in existence under various titles from the 1860s but it was only after Nugent took on the responsibility for the publication that the newspaper’s circulation increased greatly. In 1860 the circulation of *The Northern Press* which was an earlier title was 9,550 and by the end of 1893 the circulation of *The Catholic Times* was 73,000. Nugent was also responsible for *The Catholic Fireside* which was initially published as a monthly supplement to *The Catholic Times* but subsequently developed into an independent publication. The newspaper was printed at the Boys’ Refuge and was an excellent forum for

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<sup>428</sup> Canon Bennett, *Father Nugent of Liverpool*, (England, 1849) p.101

<sup>429</sup> Shannon, *Catholic Colonization of the Western Frontier*, p.65

<sup>430</sup> Letter from W. J. Onahan to Dr. Heffron in the William J. Onahan Papers at the Archives of the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Nugent to disseminate his ideals and to gain support for the great number of initiatives he undertook.<sup>431</sup>

### **Assisting the Poorest of Connemara and south Mayo to Emigrate**

By early 1880 Nugent had decided to try to permanently alleviate the distress of some families from the west of Ireland by emigration. Both Nugent and John Ireland had been engaged in efforts to assist Catholics; from the early 1870s the Catholic Colonization Society in Liverpool had sent thousands of emigrants to the Catholic colonies of Minnesota. In 1879 a revised edition of Dillon's *An Invitation to the Land: Reasons and Figures* was published at Nugent's industrial trade school in Liverpool for distribution in England, Galway and Belgium.<sup>432</sup> O'Brien's pamphlet was especially written for European circulation and 50,000 copies were published. Letters to the Colonization Bureau in Minnesota had increased, with inquiries from businessmen regarding the price of wheat. An Irish gentleman in Liverpool noted that 'wherever the word Minnesota appeared on a newspaper bulletin board, there the largest crowd gathered'.<sup>433</sup> Nugent reasoned that if one hundred families could be assisted to emigrate from the west of Ireland not only would their lives improve greatly but the land the emigrants left could be divided amongst those who remained affording them a greater opportunity to produce and earn more.<sup>434</sup>

In a letter to the Mansion House Committee Nugent stated he wrote to three bishops in America but only two of these Bishops have been identified: Bishops Ireland of St. Paul and James O'Connor of Omaha. Nugent requested that each bishop take fifty families in their settlements in Minnesota and Nebraska. In June 1880 the Mansion House Committee voted to grant a sum of £200 to assist the emigrants and in September 1880 the Duchess of Marlborough Committee agreed to devote the balance of their funds to assist whole families with Nugent's model of immigration recommended.<sup>435</sup> By this time Nugent's immigrants had

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<sup>431</sup> Canon Bennett, *Father Nugent of Liverpool*, pp 71-76

<sup>432</sup> Shannon, *Catholic Colonization on the Western Frontier*, p.64

<sup>433</sup> *Saint Paul Daily Globe*, 15 January 1880

<sup>434</sup> Moran, Gerard, "In Search of the Promised Land", *The Connemara Colonization Scheme to Minnesota*, 1880, in *Eire/Ireland*, vol. xxxi (Autumn/Winter, 1996) pp 133-136

<sup>435</sup> *The Irish Times*, 5 June, 1880, p.6; 17 September, 1880, p.3

successfully transferred to Graceville in Minnesota and had gained employment, so hopes were high.

With push factors such as poverty and crime the colonies in the Mid-West continued to attract immigrants from the east coast of the U.S. In February 1880 the *Saint Paul Daily Globe* reported that fifty families had decided to leave New York and its surrounding areas to take up homes in John Ireland's Adrian colony in Watonwan County. A further thirty Irish families from Boston, Massachusetts and Brooklyn in New York joined them in April 1880 while at the same time 6,000 additional acres were purchased in Nobles County by the Colonization Bureau.<sup>436</sup> As such it would seem that many immigrant families found themselves at the same starting position with regard to homesteading; however, those who came from the east-coast had already lived in the United States for a period of time. As with all immigrant experiences a considerable amount of time, often years, is required to adjust to a cultural environment completely different to that which was left behind. Nugent's immigrants had two major urgencies to respond to: the harrowing circumstances they left and the environment they landed in which was completely new and unusual for at least some of the immigrant families. Any advantage to be found in some of Nugent's immigrant families existed among families accustomed to migrating seasonally. The largely populated cities of the North of England and Scotland showed diversity at least even if the migrants themselves did not get to personally experience it.

In response to Nugent's request to accept immigrants Bishop O'Connor refused, as he felt he could not accept families who were suffering such hardship. John Ireland likewise had reservations but before he refused Nugent he appealed to the people of Minnesota. Ireland's friendship with Nugent may have persuaded him to make a greater effort. A meeting was held at the Bureau where it was decided that \$4,000 was required to bring twenty five families to Minnesota where they would be provided with land in Graceville.<sup>437</sup> Ireland further received a commitment from the railway companies that the families would be transported from their port of arrival at Boston to the Minnesota colonies free of charge. Ireland informed Nugent that he was willing to accept families from Connemara and instructed Major Ben Thompson, his agent in Big Stone County, to reserve fifty farms of 160

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<sup>436</sup> *Saint Paul Daily Globe*, 23 February, 28 April, 1880; *The Minneapolis Tribune*, 23 February 1880

<sup>437</sup> *Saint Paul Daily Globe*, 22 March 1880

acres each for the new settlers. Ireland further instructed Thompson to construct a small frame house on each farm and to break five acres. Major Thompson had worked with John Ireland on the Swift settlement in 1876.<sup>438</sup>

John Ireland spoke throughout the city of St. Paul and by 2 April the fund for the immigrants was \$2,389. The following week it was reported that the first 1,000 acres of colonization lands had been sold in Graceville to twenty four Irish families who had transferred from Boston. Each family had broken 30 acres of ground and planting had begun.<sup>439</sup> It would appear the rush to acquire land in Minnesota was worldwide as inquiries came from New Zealand and South Africa while a large group of Belgium prospectors travelled to Minnesota to inspect the land with a view to bringing a large group of colonists.<sup>440</sup> When Ireland's appeal for funds reached \$5,000 he informed Nugent that he was in a position to accept fifty families.

Back in Ireland Nugent selected the families who, with the support of their local clergy, were transported to Galway. Father Grealy accompanied ten families from Carna, Father Millet of Killeen arrived with thirteen families and Father Stephens escorted five families from Aughagower in county Mayo. The five families from Clifden were in the care of Thomas Campbell who had assisted Nugent to raise funds for the Connemara people in Liverpool. Nugent and Campbell's efforts were not appreciated by all: at a concert in June 1880 both men were subjected to anti-emigration cries by members of the Liverpool Land League. However, *The Galway Vindicator* lauded Nugent and the scheme; the *Austrian* was the first of the Allen Line steamers to depart from Galway. The editor of the *Galway Vindicator* called upon the people of Galway to encourage the Irish in America to send pre-paid tickets to encourage transport from Galway.<sup>441</sup>

## The Temperance Movement

The temperance movement was a significant mass movement in the latter decades of the nineteenth century. The movement opposed alcohol consumption and promoted

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<sup>438</sup> Shannon, J.P., *Catholic Colonization on the Western Frontier*, pp 156-7, *The Saint Paul Pioneer Press*, January 28, 1876

<sup>439</sup> *Saint Paul Daily Globe*, 2 and 9 April, 1880

<sup>440</sup> *Saint Paul Daily Globe*, 11 April, 1880

<sup>441</sup> *The Galway Express*, 5 June 1880; *The Galway Vindicator and Connaught Advertiser*, 5 June 1880; *Irish Times*, 5 June 1880, p. 5;

abstinence. There was a tendency to associate the Irish in particular with excessive drinking and Catholic priests strove to persuade their flocks of the advantages of temperance and sobriety. Once more it would appear Nugent worked closely with those whom he shared interests with; both Nugent and Campbell were involved in the temperance movement. Nugent had established the Catholic Total Abstinence League of the Cross in 1872 which was based on the successful abstinence crusades of Father Theobald Mathew who had earlier in the nineteenth century persuaded so many Irish to turn from the evils of alcohol. Nugent had been encouraged to set up an abstinence movement by the Mayor of Terra Haute in Indiana who Nugent engaged with while on his visit to America. The Mayor of Indiana was an expatriate of Liverpool and he along with many Irish immigrants across the United States afforded Nugent the opportunity to witness the benefits of abstinence. Cardinal Manning set up the League of the Cross in London about the same time as Nugent established his society in Liverpool. Manning had unsuccessfully attempted to encourage Nugent to move to London to assist with abstinence programmes there.<sup>442</sup> Campbell was entrusted with great responsibility which was not only to provide safe passage for the families in his care but also to ensure the passengers behaved in a manner which reflected the efforts of Nugent, John Ireland and many Catholic community leaders. Nugent possessed excellent oratory and communication skills and took every care in all aspects of his work as a defender of Catholic rights. The fraught circumstances of Catholics in England and the United States in the latter decades of the nineteenth century left little or no room for risk as too quickly the non-Catholic majority would grasp at opportunities to denigrate Catholics and in particular the most visible body of Catholics which were Irish Catholics.

Nugent's emigrants arrived in Boston on June 23 1880, the *Austrian* docked by Cunard Wharf. *The Irish American* reported the 200 Connemara immigrants bound for one of the Catholic colonies in Minnesota were met by Dillon O'Brien. The immigrants remained on board overnight and when they emerged the following day the paper described the condition of the group. 'They were all, with the exception of one family, in a state of abject poverty. Very few of the women had any shoes; none of the children. Barefooted and bareheaded,

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<sup>442</sup> Canon Bennett, *Father Nugent of Liverpool*, pp 107, 111; Furnival, John, *Children of the Second Spring Father James Nugent and the Work of Child Care in Liverpool*, (England, 2005), p.201

with but little clothes on their backs'.<sup>443</sup> The crowds on the dock gazed at the group as the children ran among the sacks and barrels on the dock while the eldest of the group sat on their boxes and bundles they had brought with them from Ireland. The group left Boston for Chicago and were met there by William J. Onahan who was secretary of the St. Patrick's Society of Chicago.

Dillon O'Brien and William J. Onahan were trusted companions of John Ireland and James Nugent. In Ireland, O'Brien had become a member of Father Matthew's temperance society and remained a lifelong member and it was this interest which cemented his friendship with John Ireland who was recognised as the leader of the Catholic temperance movement in America. At the height of the temperance movement in St. Paul in the 1870s clubs which involved older and younger men were organised. The young men's clubs were entitled 'Crusaders' and the boys clubs were called 'Cadets'. O'Brien was prominent in the Minnesota temperance movement and it was while travelling and preaching the message of temperance he realised the advantages available to immigrants willing to leave the eastern seaboard and settle on the prairie. In 1866 the *St. Paul Daily Press* described one of O'Brien's efforts to persuade his fellow Irishmen to join the temperance movement as a 'masterpiece of reasoning and eloquence'. O'Brien in his speech outlined the 'effects of the "evil society" upon society, its relations with our political economy and institutions, its bearing upon morals, religion, politics, individual happiness and national liberty – all the phases of the 'monster crime' were tried in the crucible of the orator's genius'.<sup>444</sup>

On the subject of emigration the same publication reported O'Brien's efforts in 1866 to transfer Irish immigrants from the city of Chicago to the prairies. He delivered three lectures to the Irish on the importance of their leaving the crowded cities, 'with their poverty, hardship and want, and settling upon the fertile, healthful prairies and in the delightful valleys with less labour than on any other portion of the public domain'. O'Brien described the flood of Norwegians and Germans through Milwaukee and Chicago as unparalleled in numbers. 'They are all in good condition, and hurry to their new homes in Minnesota, Wisconsin and other states'.<sup>445</sup> In 1869 O'Brien was largely instrumental in the holding of a convention in St. Louis to promote Irish immigration and as noted earlier, by 1879 his immigration work

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<sup>443</sup> *The Irish American*, 3 July, 1880

<sup>444</sup> *St. Paul Daily Press* 1 May, 1866

<sup>445</sup> *St. Paul Daily Press*, 1 July, 1866

was recognised when the Minnesota Legislature established an Immigration Board which consisted of the Governor, John S. Pilbury, Secretary of State, Fred Von Baumbach, State Treasurer, Charles Kittleton, Clerk of the Supreme Court, Samuel H. Nichols and Dillon O'Brien.<sup>446</sup>

Both O'Brien and Onahan were men who had experience of the poverty of their fellow countrymen. Despite this when Onahan met with Nugent's immigrants in Chicago he was appalled at the poverty and suffering of the families.<sup>447</sup> Onahan as secretary of the Irish Catholic Colonization Association prepared a report of the departure of the families from Galway. In Onahan's account he stated a number of families from Spiddal were also included in the group. Onahan's detailed account of the time the emigrants spent in Galway and the description of the emigrants suggest a firsthand account was provided for Onahan. Onahan's record is important as it separates those who travelled with Father Stephens from the rest of the group of Nugent's immigrants.

With the exception of the group conveyed by Father Stephen from Aughagower, they all bear the trace of hunger and extreme suffering; their clothing was scant, and in some instances gave evidence that it had only recently been received from a relief committee. Few people can realise the state from which these creatures have been received. The priests, the medical officer of the districts alone can tell the extent of suffering from which the population of Carna and the surrounding islands have passed through during the past six months. The wretched hovels in which they were damned to live, not even huts but holes in the earth – which in the Irish tongue are called *praeua* “a rabbit's den” – were not fit for human habitation.<sup>448</sup>

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<sup>446</sup> O'Brien, 'Dillon O'Brien' in *Acta Et Dicta*, Vol. VI No. 1, October 1933, pp 35-41, *Minnesota, Her Agricultural Resources. Commercial Advantages, and Manufacturing Capabilities*. (State Board of Immigration, St. Paul, MN, 1880), *Irish-American Colonization Company Records, Minnesota Historical Society, P2375 142.F.15.7B*

<sup>447</sup> Shannon, *Catholic Colonization on the Western Frontier*, p.157; Gallery, Mary Onahan, William J. Onahan, *Journal of the Illinois State historical Society (1908-1984)*, Vol. 11, No. 4 (Jan., 1919), p.637

<sup>448</sup> W.J. Onahan report as Secretary of the Irish Catholic Colonisation Association dated 18 June 1880, in the *Helen Angela Hurley compilation in the John Ireland Collection, section 1, notes and citations 1838-1889, of the Minnesota Historical Society's Manuscript Collection, CBA.165 Box 1*

According to Onahan, when Father Nugent arrived in Galway and stepped on to the platform both priests and people ‘dropped upon their knees to receive his blessing’. As he passed through the streets young and old, many of whom had travelled fifteen and twenty miles beseeched him that they be sent ‘out’. Nugent stated he was determined to send families as only families could avail of land grants in Minnesota.<sup>449</sup> When the immigrants reached Chicago Onahan provided food and additional clothing for the families.

Onahan immediately recognised the difficulty that would arise by placing the immigrants directly into a colony. In a letter to Bishop O’Connor, Onahan warned of accepting individuals who appeared unfit for the efforts required for colonization. He further stated he was sure Nugent would ask O’Connor to accept impoverished immigrants but felt the only way this could be done was if the immigrants were given land but not land in the new colonies. According to Onahan, ‘Father Nugent is not content to rest with the one experiment of fifty families of the Connemara people he lately sent over. He is eager to send the other 50 to Nebraska and he writes me pressing strongly for cooperation’.<sup>450</sup> Onahan outlined the difficulties he had faced with Nugent’s immigrants and stated he hoped not to have to face such a task in the future. ‘A more wretched lot of people I never saw, and their condition at home must have been deplorable. I would not care to say publicly but I am convinced they would ruin the prospects of any colony into which they would find entrance’.<sup>451</sup> Onahan declined to provide reasons for his opinion as he stated it would not credit Nugent’s immigrants. However, despite his reservation, he stated, ‘I applaud Fr. Nugent for his work and Bishop Ireland for his cooperation. For these people any change is a boon and a blessing and it is God’s work to help them’.<sup>452</sup> Onahan stressed the need to settle immigrants from Ireland who ‘besides possessing means, will also have the other necessary qualities – which I am sorry to say the late emigrants seem to be wholly lacking’.<sup>453</sup>

Onahan’s letter to O’Connor was suggestive of the caution with which a person experienced in politics and commerce would write. Onahan realised immediately the risk of imposing a group which were so destitute upon a fledgling colony. The colonies in Minnesota were in their infancy and it was hugely important for the success of the colonies that the people who came to the prairies remained on them there. Furthermore, Irish Catholics in the U.S. had struggled to achieve acceptance and it was important that those who relocated to

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<sup>449</sup> Ibid.

<sup>450</sup> Onahan to O’Connor, July 1, 1880, Omaha Chancery Archives, Colonization File, recorded in Shannon, *Catholic Colonization on the Western Frontier*, p.159

<sup>451</sup> Ibid.

<sup>452</sup> Ibid.

<sup>453</sup> Ibid.



Minnesota adapted to their new environment and acclimatised. Nugent and Ireland had experience of people at the lowest levels of society and knew that given support these same people had the ability to advance and flourish. The difference between Onahan and the clergymen may be a testament to the character of Nugent and John Ireland. Conversely, both Nugent and Ireland with the best of intentions may have inadvertently put more than the welfare of the immigrants at risk by not viewing the situation with the same pragmatism as Onahan.

### **John Ireland's Colonies in Minnesota**

The fledgling colony which welcomed Nugent's immigrants was established under the guidance of the Catholic Colonization Bureau. Ten villages and farming communities were set-up in Minnesota between 1876 and 1881. The counties included Swift, Big Stone, Lyon, Murray and Nobles, all in western Minnesota. The villages included; De Graff, Clontarf, Graceville, Minneota, Ghent, Currie, Avoca, Iona, Fulda and Adrian. All settlers were Catholic and came from Ireland, England, Belgium, Germany and French Canada. According to Shannon most of the migrants who settled in the colonies of Minnesota came from the eastern seaboard, but a 'good number' also came from overseas.<sup>454</sup>

The efforts of Nugent, John Ireland and others were solely of concern for destitute immigrants who arrived in the U.S. penniless. John Ireland's first effort to promote immigration to the Mid-west was in 1864 when he formed the Minnesota Irish Immigration Society to promote immigrant aid. This initial venture was unsuccessful but did not dissuade Ireland and within one month of him becoming Coadjutor Bishop of St. Paul in 1875 he set up the Catholic Colonisation Bureau. Dillon O'Brien, a close ally of Ireland and editor of the *North-western Chronicle* was appointed chairman of the organisation. Ireland set about putting a plan for immigration in place that would exceed the aspirations of the men who preceded him such as Daniel O'Connell, D'Arcy McGee and Bishops' Loras and Grace.

By early 1876 *The Northwestern Chronicle* reported that Ireland had acquired seventy-five thousand acres of railroad land with the intention of relocating two thousand Catholic families to Minnesota. From 1876 to 1879 Ireland held contracts for 369,000 acres in south-western and mid-central Minnesota. A further 10,000 acres were purchased for Irish immigrants by John Sweetman who was advised and assisted by John Ireland. In turn

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<sup>454</sup> Shannon, James, P., *Catholic Colonization on the Western Frontier*, pp 55-59

inexpensive farm land was offered to immigrants but with a \$400 minimum stake needed for a family for its first year, many poor Irish families were eliminated from the scheme. Figure 1 indicates the number of acres and the districts where land was available. Those who took up John Ireland's offer to avail of land came mostly from the Mid-west and New England. As such the Catholic Colonisation Bureau had not up to 1880 accepted immigrants who had arrived directly from Ireland. Furthermore, no long term experience had been gained by Ireland in dealing with the most destitute. James Nugent had for many years worked and understood the complexities of poverty but the same cannot be said for John Ireland or John Sweetman for that matter as the poverty of the east coast of Ireland could not be measured against the destitution of the west where land and all that depended upon it were of inferior quality.

Settlers who acquired land from John Ireland paid with land certificates of the Saint Paul and Pacific Railroad. Earlier attempts to build colonies had been destroyed by land speculators who purchased cheap land in new settlements with the result that the land became unaffordable for immigrants to purchase. By the terms of the original state and federal land grants the railroads were given land from six to ten miles along the line of the railroad. Not all the land along this path was given to the railroads; the remaining land was retained by the United States Government in the Federal territories and by the state legislature in established states. This land could be claimed freely by settlers under the Homestead Act. Such settlers were entitled to eighty acres within ten miles of the railroad or 160 acres beyond this point.<sup>455</sup>

Fig 1: Number of acres under the control of the Catholic Colonization Bureau 1876-80<sup>456</sup>

County	Acres
Swift County (De Graff and Clontarf)	117,000
Nobles County (Adrian)	105,000
Murray County (Avoca, Iona, Fulda)	52,000
Murray County (Currie)	10,000
Big Stone County (Graceville)	50,000
Lyon County (Minneota and Ghent)	45,000
Total	379,000

In 1877 the Catholic Colonization Bureau published *An Invitation to the Land: Reasons and Figures* as noted earlier in this chapter which was widely distributed in the east to encourage people to come west. Extreme hardship had been placed on striking miners and

<sup>455</sup> Shannon, *Catholic Colonisation on the Western Frontier*, pp 47-48, 49

<sup>456</sup> Shannon, *Catholic Colonization on the Western Frontier*, p.59

trade unions in the east in 1875 and it was to this class that O'Brien appealed to. The miners who were mostly Irish became involved in a struggle which saw the mass mobilisation of workers pitted against the power of the industrialists who united their resources in an attempt to wipe out the rising trade union movement.<sup>457</sup> The Molly Maguires and the trade union movement represented fundamentally different answers to the same question of how to improve the conditions of life and labour in the anthracite region. Even within the Irish mining communities hostilities existed with the predominantly Catholic Molly Maguires and the 'Sheet Iron Gang' with the latter having descended from British miners who had settled in the Castlecomer area of Kilkenny. The Kilkenny men were derisively called 'souters' as many of them were Protestant.<sup>458</sup> An important concern voiced by O'Brien in his appeal for settlers was that only farmers or men who wanted to become farmers should come west. His appeal to men working in the east was based on the assumption that these men had been farmers before immigrating to America.<sup>459</sup>

In 1879 Archbishop Ireland and Bishop Spalding made a tour of the eastern cities to promote colonisation. In June 1879 Ireland addressed a mass meeting of labourers and unemployed men at the Peter Cooper Union in New York. Despite Ireland's and O'Brien's appeals, by the late 1870s it appeared most of the settlers to the Minnesota colonies were not labourers from the east coast of the United States. In order to achieve the success Ireland and O'Brien envisioned, colonization had to be considered on a national basis. With this in mind a conference was called by the St. Patrick's Society of Chicago on March 17, 1879. Ireland and other leading Catholic advocates of colonisation such as Bishops Spalding and O'Connor attended the conference. A committee was appointed which met a few weeks later and formed the Irish Catholic Colonization Association of the United States. The Directors of the organisation included Archbishop Ireland of St. Paul, Archbishop Gibbons of Baltimore, Archbishop Williams of Boston, Bishop Ryan of Buffalo, Bishop O'Connor of Omaha, Bishop Spalding of Peoria, Mr. John Lawler of Prairie Du Chien and W. J. Onahan of Chicago.

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<sup>457</sup> The industrialists' included coal mine owners and the railway company owners who were assisted by government, the press and the church. The actions of the miners were severely curtailed by the Coal and Iron Police, 'that private army, clothed with the police power of the state, which has long been infamous in labour history as the Pennsylvania Cossacks'. The striking miners were known as the 'Molly Maguires'. Membership of this secret society was often enough to send a man to his death. Bimba Anthony, *The Molly Maguires*, (New York, 2000) pp 54-55

<sup>458</sup> Kenny, Kevin, *Making Sense of the Molly Maguires*, (Oxford University Press, 1998), pp 68-70

<sup>459</sup> Shannon, *Catholic Colonisation on the Western Frontier*, pp 62-63

The association was a joint stock company incorporated under the laws of Illinois whose aims were to purchase land to sell to prospective colonists. The association further decided those who were unable to pay cash were to be given the land on credit with payments due over a considerable number of years; however, a distinction was made between those who had little means and those with no means. Each prospective settler family was required to have \$600 or \$700 as an investment as experience had shown that those who provided no outlay but were given all the implements required to succeed were the same people who failed on the land.<sup>460</sup> Bishop Ireland was tireless in his efforts to acquire funding. In February 1880 he raised \$100,000 by the sale of certificates of stock issued by the association and transferred 8,000 acres of land in the Adrian colony to the association. The land was purchased from the railroad to be sold to prospective settlers. Despite Ireland's strenuous efforts only \$83,000 was paid into the association and with such nominal funding only a small number of settlers were placed on the land by the association in Minnesota and Nebraska.<sup>461</sup>

John Ireland, O'Brien and the many advocates of Irish Catholics in the United States wanted Irish men and women to succeed in a new land without the stifling oppression of a government system determined to see them as inferior. Shopkeepers and farmers did respond to the appeals of Catholic Colonisation; however, for the very poorest living in the unheated waterless tenements such as Gotham Court on New York's Lower East Side migrating west was out of reach. The recommended \$400 required for settlement as noted in Ireland's first letter in the *Northwestern Chronicle* in January 1876 was not attainable for so many of New York's poorest families. The greater amount of \$600 recommended by the Irish Catholic Colonization Association even further removed the prospect of a better life on the prairies for the poorest slum dwellers.<sup>462</sup>

As already outlined, Nugent was not the first to consider assisting immigrants to leave an impoverished existence in Ireland to farm in Minnesota. The success of the Catholic Colonisation Society and the purchase of lands in Nebraska and Minnesota for Catholic settlement purposes further led John Sweetman to the Mid-West. In the story of Irish immigration to Minnesota, Sweetman as an advocate and supporter of Catholic Colonisation must be considered in a similar light as John Ireland, Dillon O'Brien and James Nugent. Sweetman toured three of Ireland's proposed colonies at Avoca, Adrian and Minneota and

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<sup>460</sup> O'Grady, John, Irish Colonization in the United States in *Studies*, September 1930, p.406

<sup>461</sup> Moynihan Humphrey, Archbishop Ireland's Colonies, in *Acta Et Dicta*, October, 1934, p.230

<sup>462</sup> Shannon, *Catholic Colonisation on the Western Frontier*, pp 51-52

further explored the lands of Winnipeg in Canada and Bismarck, Jamestown, and Watertown in the Dakotas.<sup>463</sup> Sweetman arranged with the railway company who owned the tract around Currie north of Avoca to purchase ten thousand acres at one pound an acre. Sweetman then returned to Ireland and set about establishing a stock company with headquarters in Dublin to sell stock to fund the purchase of land which in turn was to be sold to Irish settlers on reasonable terms. The company was not established for charitable purposes as land would be sold to settlers at an interest rate of 6 per cent while loans for supplies and equipment was to be provided at 8 per cent interest.<sup>464</sup> Figure 2 indicates the financial plan Sweetman proposed in which it was recommended that families pay cash for farms if circumstances allowed as this offered a 20 per cent discount for the land. The advantage of the terms of the loans was that repayment of the principal was postponed until the farmer had time to raise several crops from his land.

Fig 2: Financial plan for the purchase of 80 acres at £1 5s an acre at Avoca. Total initial outlay cost £100 at 7% interest.<sup>465</sup>

Date	Terms and conditions	Annual Cost	Accumulation
January 1, 1881	At time of purchase, one year's interest in advance at 7%	£ 7	£7
January 1, 1882	One year's interest	£ 7	£7
January 1, 1883	10 % of principal due	£10 0	
	Interest on balance	£ 6 6	£16 6
January 1, 1884	10% of principal due	£10 0	
	Interest on balance	£ 5 12	£15 12
January 1, 1885	20% of principal due	£20 0	
	Interest on balance	£ 4 4	£24 4
January 1, 1886	20% of principal due	£20 0	
	Interest on balance	£ 2 16	£22 16
January 1, 1887	20% of principal due	£20 0	
	Interest on balance	£ 1 8	£21 8
January 1, 1888	20% of principal due	£20 0	£20 0
	Land Paid for, Total		£134 6

The Catholic Colonisation Bureau outlined the benefits of acquiring a quarter section of land which was 80 acres as after seven years, the land paid for itself, supported a family, offered a balance in cash and was worth more than twice its original value. Sweetman

<sup>463</sup> Smith, Alice E., 'The Sweetman Irish Colony', in *Minnesota History*, 9 (1928), p.334

<sup>464</sup> Smith, Alice E., 'The Sweetman Irish Colony', in *Minnesota History*, 9 (1928), p.337

<sup>465</sup> Catholic Colonization in Minnesota. Colony of Avoca, Murray County, South-Western Minnesota. Published by the Catholic Colonization Bureau, St. Paul, Minnesota. (Dublin, 1880), pp 13-4, *Sweetman Family Papers, National Library of Ireland, 156, MS 47,598/2; Irish-American Colonization Company Records, Minnesota Historical Society, P2375 142.F.15.7B*

relocated to Minnesota and brought emigrants from Ireland to Currie in the spring of 1881, each family was provided with a home, supplies and implements. Sweetman left the immigrants in the charge of the colony manager J.P. O'Connor, whom Sweetman had employed on the advice of John Ireland. Sweetman returned to his home in Murray County and worked for a number of years before returning to live in Ireland on a more permanent basis.

### **The Benefits of Migrating to Minnesota**

For many families the move west to Minnesota brought vast improvements to their lives where discrimination was less and where opportunities were greater. From the early 1870s onwards more strident efforts were made for the colonization of Minnesotan lands. In 1872 the Minnesota State Board of Immigration published a report compiled by the Commissioner of Statistics which positively promoted immigration to Minnesota. Cases of successful immigrants were cited such as that of Andrew Barlow who was compelled to leave New York and who had worked his way west earning along the way. Having reached Minnesota he purchased 320 acres and paid for his family to join him. Of the ten examples cited all became successful farmers in Minnesota.<sup>466</sup> The Catholic Colonization Company along with individual claims saw most of Minnesotan lands secured by the early 1880s.

In 1880, the state agency which took on the responsibility of encouraging immigration but not solely to Catholics, The Immigration Board, published *Minnesota, Her Agricultural Resources. Commercial Advantages, and Manufacturing Capabilities*. The number of acres cultivated in Minnesota by 1878 was 3,429,164 and increased to 4,090,039 by 1879 which coincided with an increase in the value of land. In 1874 the assessed value of all the taxable property in the state was \$217,427,211 and by 1878 this increased by \$12,363,831 which was an increase of over three million each year; by 1879 the value of taxable land increased to \$242,489,038 which was an increase of \$12,698,996 in one single year. The source of this increase was the 'unusual influx of new settlers', which was an indication of the success of the efforts of all groups attempting to attract settlers to the prairies.<sup>467</sup> By 1880 the population

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<sup>466</sup> *Minnesota, It's Resources and Progress. It's beauty healthfulness and fertility and it's attractions and advantages as a home for immigrants.* (The State Board of Immigration, St. Paul, MN 1872), *Sweetman Family Papers, National Library of Ireland, 156, MS 47,598/2; Irish-American Colonization Company Records, Minnesota Historical Society, P2375 142.F.15.7B, p.72-4*

<sup>467</sup> *Minnesota, Her Agricultural Resources. Commercial Advantages, and Manufacturing Capabilities.* (The State Board of Immigration, St. Paul, MN 1880), *Sweetman Family Papers, National Library of Ireland, 156,*

of Minnesota was described as one which consisted of native born citizens from other states and a large percentage of immigrants from Germany, Sweden, Norway, Ireland, England, Scotland and Canada with fewer numbers of Welsh, Poles, Bohemians, Russians and French. Most immigrants did mix with one another when the English language was acquired and the ‘prejudices of race and nationality are soon overcome by association’.<sup>468</sup>

Numerous opportunities existed for new immigrants to Minnesota. Mining prospectors were rewarded with iron deposits of excellent quality along with other valuable metals. Minnesota’s agricultural produce mainly consisted of wheat as the yields were plentiful; wheat had further advantages as it could be sold for cash. Minnesota had earned a world-wide reputation of growing the best wheat in the U.S. if not the world. Other crops grown in Minnesota included corn, oats, rye barley, buckwheat, timothy, clover, flax, hemp along with wild grasses and an abundance of wild fruits and berries such as apples, plums, blackberries, strawberries and grapes with the latter being used to make wine. The wild grasses of the state provided excellent pasture and hay for livestock with the latter preferred by farmers over timothy grass. Bees and honey were further wild products of Minnesota which when domesticated thrived greatly; maple sugar and syrup was widely produced with maple trees generally scattered throughout the state. Farmers’ gardens produced root vegetables of excellent quality such as potatoes, carrots, salsify, radishes and onions while water-melons, cantelopes and musk-mellons along with cabbage, lettuce, spinach, endives, peas and beans were harvested all summer with squash and pumpkin harvested in autumn. White willow, white maple, cottonwood, linden and other fast growing trees were grown to shelter homes from wind.

In 1873 Congress passed a law which further encouraged forest tree planting. This law was endorsed by the Minnesota state legislature and funds were provided for the State Forestry Association. The Hon. L. B. Hodges as secretary of the association provided grants in the shape of premiums to increase forest planning ensuring a ready fuel supply was available. The native forests along with the coal fields of Iowa further augmented fuel supplies. It is important to note the prominence of L.B. Hodges in Minnesota civic society as

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*MS 47,598/2; Irish-American Colonization Company Records, Minnesota Historical Society, P2375 142.F.15.7B, p. 2*

<sup>468</sup>*Ibid.*, p.9

he was chosen to investigate the circumstances surrounding Nugent's immigrants when difficulties arose in Graceville.

Cattle raising was a further practice and remarkably the feeding season of Minnesota was as long if not longer than that of Illinois or Missouri as grass continued to grow up to November and rapid growth took place once spring commenced. The climate of Minnesota although cold in winter was dry, and diseases which were easily contracted in warmer damper climates did not affect cattle. Along with common cattle, Durhams, Jerseys Ayrshires, Galloways, Herefords and Devons were raised. A good number of farmers engaged in dairy cattle producing cheese and milk in abundance. By 1880 there were 46 cheese factories in operation in Minnesota with markets for their produce on the east coast and in England. Sheep, hogs, horses, beef, mutton and pork all thrived in Minnesota and when slaughtered they were free from diseases of the liver, kidney and intestines. No sign of trichina was found in Minnesota hogs and the bacon made from them was found to be dense and not dry and deliciously flavoured.<sup>469</sup>

The amount of investment required by an immigrant as recommended by the immigration board was \$465 and included entry fees for land, \$17; material for house, \$45; furniture without bedding, \$40; farm implements and oxen, \$223; living for the first sixteen months, \$100; and incidentals, \$40. Although the initial outlay was a considerable amount this was offset by the levels of employment and high rates of pay available. A great demand existed for skilled and unskilled workers such as carpenters, blacksmiths, brick and stone-masons and house painters. Those who were guaranteed work were men who could handle an axe or spade. There was also work for those who could handle horses and oxen and general farm labour. The title to lands was brought to the attention of immigrants in Great Britain but in particular to tenants in Ireland. The board outlined that the land acquired was obtained for perpetual ownership with no landlord and no yearly rent to pay along with no church rates or tithes. 'The settler's farm is his private domain and his house is really his

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<sup>469</sup> *Minnesota, Her Agricultural Resources, Commercial Advantages, and Manufacturing Capabilities*. (The State Board of Immigration, St. Paul, MN 1880), *Sweetman Family Papers, National Library of Ireland*, 156, MS 47,598/2; *Irish-American Colonization Company Records, Minnesota Historical Society*, P2375 142.F.15.7B, pp 17-25



castle', where a tenant 'becomes his own master and his own man for life, and leaves this precious legacy to his children'.<sup>470</sup>

### **Graceville - The 'Homestead Colony'**

Nugent's immigrants arrived in 1880 and were given great tracts of land which with hard work they could own within seven years. The 'homestead colony' of Graceville had only been established in the year before the immigrants arrived. In 1876, with the establishment of the Catholic Colonization Bureau, John Ireland revealed that he had signed a contract with the St. Paul and Pacific Railroad making him exclusive agent for all railroad lands in Swift County. This was the first of eleven contracts which were signed by the Bishop and five different railroads over the next five years. In 1877, 70,000 acres of railway land in Nobles County in the south-western corner of the state was acquired and by April 1878 Ireland obtained a further 52,000 acres of railway lands around Avoca in Murray County which was subsequently sold for \$5-\$6 an acre. It was this colony that James Nugent and James H. Tuke visited in 1879 and interviewed various colonists. Other areas where land was acquired by Ireland included 45,000 acres in Lyon County in western Minnesota.<sup>471</sup>

In 1878 John Ireland commissioned J.R. King, a surveyor to find lands in Big Stone County for a new townsite and farm colony. The region of the Toqua Lakes in Big Stone County in western Minnesota had been a famous hunting ground for Indians and was further known for the richness of the soil which was easily adapted for tillage and livestock. The land had been acquired in 1874 by Colonel Dunlap who entered claims for 120 acres around the lakes and it was these lands which were added to King's soldier's claim of 80 acres which became Graceville named after Bishop Grace of St. Paul. Immediately settlers came from various parts of America and Europe to the newly established colony. Some of the immigrants came from Lowell in New York.<sup>472</sup> As much of the land of Graceville belonged to the federal government settlers were able to claim lands under the homestead or tree-culture laws. At the same time James J. Hill had been named as manager of the restructured

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<sup>470</sup> *Minnesota, Her Agricultural Resources. Commercial Advantages, and Manufacturing Capabilities.* (The State Board of Immigration, St. Paul, MN 1880), *Sweetman Family Papers, National Library of Ireland*, 156, MS 47,598/2; *Irish-American Colonization Company Records, Minnesota Historical Society*, P2375 142.F.15.7B, pp 28-9

<sup>471</sup> Shannon, James, *Catholic Colonization on the Western Frontier*, p.55; Moynihan, J.H., *The Life Of Archbishop John Ireland*, pp 27-8; Moynihan, J.H., *The Life Of Archbishop John Ireland*, p.28, Archbishop Ireland's Colonies, in *Acta Et Dicta*, October 1934, p.226, *Catholic Colonization in Minnesota. Colony of Avoca, Murray County, South-Western Minnesota.* Published by the Catholic Colonization Bureau, St. Paul, Minnesota. (Dublin, 1880), p.10

<sup>472</sup> *The Lowell Daily Courier*, 24 April, 1883, p.8

St. Paul, Minneapolis, and Manitoba Railroad Company. The company held a parcel of railway lands called indemnity lands which had been given to the railway company by Congress. This was to compensate the railway company for the portions of land which had already been settled when the railway came through or for those portions of lands unsuitable for tillage and as such did not have the same value. When Hill became manager of the St. Paul, Minneapolis, and Manitoba Railroad Company, he placed 50,000 of these acres in Big Stone and Traverse Counties under Bishop Ireland's control for a period of two years beginning December 31, 1879.

During the months of March and April 1878, prompt action on behalf of the Colonization Bureau saw one hundred and seventy five families relocate to Graceville to claim public lands. Many of the colonists were poor people who were induced to leave Minnesota towns and settle on the land. The land was sold at \$4 an acre but before any of the settlers took possession of the land Bishop Ireland shipped in five carloads of lumber for the erection of a church. The church was completed in three weeks at a cost of \$689 and King was commissioned by Ireland to act as advisor for all incoming settlers while Father A.V. Pelisson, a native of France was named resident pastor. King's salary for one year in 1878 was \$631.<sup>473</sup> Within three months of the opening of the colony over 150 cabins had been erected within a radius of six miles of the church in Graceville. By January 1879, the village of Graceville had three general stores, one hotel, one blacksmith and wagon shop, and a church with a priest's residence attached. Graceville was located 26 miles from Morris through which passed the St. Paul and Pacific Railway line. Railway construction created employment and a wage greatly welcomed by families as many of the settlers were poor and without means. The Colonization Bureau advised intending immigrants not to arrive later than the first week in May and clearly outlined that only farmers should settle on the land.<sup>474</sup> The necessity for immigrants to arrive in spring was stressed by those advocating immigration. As early as 1872 the state Immigration Board of which Dillon O'Brien was a member advised those without means to arrive no later than spring.<sup>475</sup>

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<sup>473</sup> Catholic Colonization Bureau Ledgers, Archives of the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis

<sup>474</sup> Shannon, James, *Catholic Colonization on the Western Frontier*, p. 58; Catholic Colonization in Minnesota, Revised Edition, Published by the Catholic Colonization Bureau of Minnesota Under the Auspices of the Right Reverend John Ireland, Coadjutor Bishop of St. Paul, MN January 1879, pp 45-7, 55

<sup>475</sup> *Minnesota: It's resources and progress. It's beauty healthfulness and Fertility; and it's attractions and advantages as a home for immigrants*. Compiled by the Commissioner of Statistics and published by direction of State Board and Immigration, 1872, pp 70-1

## Conclusion

Nugent's immigrants were given every opportunity to succeed on the Minnesota prairie. The experience brought to bear by John Ireland, Dillon O'Brien and the many others who were either employed by the Emigration Bureau or who volunteered in an effort to improve the lives of their fellow countrymen could only have benefitted the immigrants. The newly established colony of Graceville provided excellent land and employment prospects. After the first few months and before the freezing winter had set in the immigrants appeared to have successfully transitioned. Even those who had worked tirelessly in the effort to prevent famine deaths in the west of Ireland were committed to repeat Nugent's model of assisted colonization. However, this opportunity never arose as within months of the immigrants' arrival and whilst in the throes of a harsh winter stories began to emanate from the colony which halted any further attempts to copy Nugent's model. Although much of what was required by the immigrants was well thought-out by those who provided the charitable lifeline there remained so much more that had still to be considered. The success of Nugent's immigrants was dependent upon a number of factors which included the effort the immigrants themselves brought to bear along with the culture and climactic conditions of the immigrants' new environment. However, as with all anthropological studies the conditions which aid successful transition and assimilation are complex and the immigrant experience is different for every group. A more detailed examination of the unique challenges that Nugent's immigrants faced will reveal the intricate nature of immigration and will further add to the complicated narrative of Irish-America.

## Chapter 4: Nugent's Immigrants in Graceville

The origins of this study can be found in what is described as the 'event' which has subsequently allowed this group to be included in most studies of Irish Catholics to Minnesota. Nugent's immigrants may only have existed in the memories of families, had the press failed to publicise the incidents of hardship they met with. Other than that the story of Nugent's immigrants was as unremarkable as the millions of other stories which describe what can only be identified as the American experience. However and conversely, the importance of this particular group is beyond the narrative which would seem to merely include the success or failure of the group and those who supported the group. In the greater study which is Irish-American history, Nugent's immigrants are of tremendous value as they can successfully be followed from their communities in Connemara and Mayo to their American destination and in some cases beyond. This particular chain is not unique but in the case of impoverished immigrants with no social capital Nugent's immigrants are exceptional.

The event which brought notoriety to Nugent's immigrants was the destitution they found themselves in at Graceville and the response of those who had assisted them. Although greater philosophical debate is required with regard to the definition of failure, for the purposes of this study it is the recorded history which is being considered and as such Nugent's immigrants have only been discussed in terms of failure. In reviewing this history, the event or the narrative must be examined and in doing so the authors of the narrative must also be scrutinized.

The importance of the Nugent immigrants cannot be understated as John Ireland envisioned they would become successful farmers and silence the nativist critics who held that foreign born settlers made second rate citizens or third rate farmers.<sup>476</sup> It was the last week in June when Nugent's immigrants arrived in Graceville to the Bureau's 'Homestead Colony' having travelled from Boston to St. Paul via Chicago.<sup>477</sup> In Chicago, as we have seen, W. J. Onahan was appalled at the poverty of the immigrants. 'The famine was visible in their pinched and emaciated faces, and the shrivelled limbs – they could scarcely be called legs and arms – of the children. Their features were quaint, and the entire company was squalid and wretched'.<sup>478</sup> As previously outlined, Onahan advised Bishop O'Connor not to accept immigrants sent by Nugent as no settlement, in particular a vulnerable new settlement,

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<sup>476</sup> Shannon, James, *Catholic Colonization on the Western Frontier*, p. 160

<sup>477</sup> *The Clinton Courier*, 1 July, 1880

<sup>478</sup> *Catholic Review*, January 1, 1881, quoting a statement by Onahan in the *Chicago Tribune*, recorded in Shannon, *Catholic Colonization*, p. 158

could benefit from such additions. In St. Paul, John Ireland did not renege on his commitment to accept Nugent's immigrants. *The Northwestern Chronicle* reported that 'a number of kind and charitable gentlemen will be on hand to invite them warmly to partake of Minnesota bounteous gifts'.<sup>479</sup> As opposed to sending all members of each family west to Graceville, Ireland secured employment for forty-five young men while thirty-five young women were sent to the hospital and asylum where the Sisters of St. Joseph took charge over them and helped to find them positions.<sup>480</sup> It was John Ireland's hope that the income earned by the young able-bodied would support the families who moved to the Graceville colony. In a self-congratulatory tone *The Northwestern Chronicle* declared, 'we can safely say that never have immigrants to America been treated as kindly and as tenderly as Minnesota's Connemara wards'.<sup>481</sup> A tremendous sense of pride exuded from the Irish-Minnesotan community as not only had they heard the harrowing tales of famine from Ireland but now they were able to directly assist a number of these impoverished people.

The hardship the people of Connemara faced in the late 1870s was reported in great detail by Minnesota newspapers. *The St Paul Pioneer Press* provided lengthy accounts of the distress and the political environment of Ireland where Land League leaders were arrested, accused of agitation along with the anti-rent campaign. Public works programmes initiated by Lowther were also discussed. Parnell and other Land League leaders were described as 'agitators who have taken an active share in the movement, partly from a real interest in the fortunes of the unlucky tenantry, partly, it is likely, from less worthy motives of political ambition'.<sup>482</sup> The violence used by some ejected tenants was compared to 'American strikers to discourage workmen willing to take their places'.<sup>483</sup> *The Pioneer Press* felt tenants had a genuine grievance which 'commands the support of enlightened and right-thinking persons everywhere' but a danger existed whereby the merits of the cause would be lost 'in a chaos of unreasonable and baseless political agitation'.<sup>484</sup> With regard to Parnell's visit to America, the same publication thought it may be more 'economical and prudent to answer Mr. Parnell's appeals by sending ship loads of food to Ireland than by putting money into his

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<sup>479</sup> *Northwestern Chronicle*, June 26, 1880, p.1

<sup>480</sup> Shannon, *Catholic Colonization*, p. 157; Moran, Gerard, "'In Search Of The Promised Land'", *The Connemara Colonization Scheme To Minnesota, 1880*. 1997, p. 142-143. Shannon, 'Bishop Ireland's Connemara Experiment' in *Minnesota History* March 1957, p. 208; *The Minneapolis Tribune* states the number of men was 47, July 18, 1880; *Northwestern Chronicle*, June 26, 1880, p.1

<sup>481</sup> *Northwestern Chronicle*, June 26, 1880, p.1

<sup>482</sup> *St Paul Pioneer Press*, 19, 23, 24 November 1879

<sup>483</sup> *St Paul Pioneer Press*, 19, 23, 24 November 1879

<sup>484</sup> *The St Paul Pioneer Press*, 27 November 1879

hands'.<sup>485</sup> Parnell arrived in St Paul and Minneapolis on 26 February and contrary to Irish nationalist newspaper reports *The Pioneer Press* reported that 'Parnell has not convinced the American people that he is the best medium through which to send their contributions ... he is in a fair way to go back emptyhanded'.<sup>486</sup> With attempts to separate relief aid from political agitation, the Mansion House and the Marlborough committees were lauded. Further, the people of St Paul and Minneapolis were encouraged to give charity to Doctor D.F. Collins who was authorised to take charge of all contributions in aid of the *New York Herald* fund. Collins along with other prominent Irish Catholics of the twin cities had established a charitable relief fund in January 1880.<sup>487</sup> Despite criticism of Parnell and Dillon they were warmly welcomed to St Paul and Minneapolis where they spoke in each city. The St Paul meeting was addressed by the Mayor and John Ireland while \$1,700 was raised in subscriptions. One week after Parnell departed the U.S. on 11 March, and on the back of the wave of support for those destitute in the west of Ireland the *Northwestern Chronicle* announced Nugent's and John Ireland's efforts to bring Irish immigrants to Minnesota.<sup>488</sup>

The excellent reputation of Minnesota's Catholic colonies was described by the *Saint Paul Daily Globe* as 'world-wide' in April 1880. Letters were received from France, Switzerland, Belgium, Germany, New Zealand and Port Elizabeth in South Africa. Further in April, the thirty Irish families arrived in Adrian from Boston and Brooklyn in New York.<sup>489</sup> Nugent's immigrants travelled by train from St. Paul to Morris in Swift County and then by buggy to Graceville. Upon their arrival at their homesteads in Big Stone County each family was allocated 160 acres with five acres broken ready to be tilled. The immigrants were further provided with clothing, furniture, farm implements, seed and credit for a year's supply of food.<sup>490</sup> Nugent's immigrants did not begin farming immediately as they had arrived late in the planting season; - hence the Colonisation Bureau's commitment to care for the immigrants for the first year. Instead the men took employment as day labourers earning from \$1.50-\$2.00 a day. Opportunities on the construction of the new railway lines provided immediate income. The western extension of the Saint Cloud and Lake Traverse Railroad from Morris to Graceville was to be completed by the autumn of 1880. The lure of immediate

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<sup>485</sup> *The St Paul Pioneer Press*, 3 January, 1880

<sup>486</sup> *The St Paul Pioneer Press*, 13 February 1880

<sup>487</sup> *The St Paul Pioneer Press*, 29 January 1880; 12, 14 February 1880

<sup>488</sup> *Saint Paul Daily Globe*, February 27, March 21, 22; *The St Paul Pioneer Press*, 13 March 1880; *The Minneapolis Tribune*, March 23

<sup>489</sup> *Saint Paul Daily Globe*, April 7, 28, 1880

<sup>490</sup> Shannon, *Catholic Colonization*, p. 157; Moran, "In Search Of The Promised Land", *The Connemara Colonization Scheme To Minnesota, 1880*. 1997, p. 142-143. Shannon, 'Bishop Ireland's Connemara Experiment' in *Minnesota History* March 1957, p. 208

earnings was far greater than applying labour to the land. It is important to note the reasons why men took up labouring positions as opposed to investing time and effort in farming. The hardships of small farmers and of those dependent upon agricultural labour had failed so many Connemara families that those who could avail of migratory labour did so. Also, the people of Connemara had become accustomed to living from season to season: an investment in land with the promise of future gains was difficult to contemplate or accept. Lastly, the immigrants did not farm immediately as they did not have had the necessary help to work the land. After all, 90 of the strongest members of the group had remained in St. Paul.

Figure 1 indicates the families that Nugent assisted to leave. The thirty-five families are identified from the shipping list according to the criteria set down by Nugent. Of the 288 individuals 128 people were aged from ten to thirty years old, the majority of which remained in St. Paul. Figure 1 also indicates that there were ten men between the ages of 30 and 40 and twenty-four men over forty with the greatest experience in farming. Furthermore, 93 children under ten years of age were dependents and did not have the same value in terms of agricultural labour on the farm. In further analysis of the group it can be seen there were 99 males over the age of 10 years and 45 men above the age of 20 years. With 45 men having remained in St. Paul it can be seen even at the outset this group would encounter difficulties. The criteria identified by Nugent and proponents of assisted immigration and colonisation required strong young people to assist on the prairie to work the land, collect the harvest and to prepare for the extreme Minnesotan winter.

Fig 1: Age of Nugent's immigrants from the shipping list of the *S.S. Austrian*<sup>491</sup>

	Infants	1-9 yrs	10-20	21-30	31-40	41-50	<50	Total
Males	2	45	54	11	10	18	6	146
Females	4	42	53	10	20	11	2	142
Totals	6	87	107	21	30	29	8	288

## Discontentment on the Prairies

What ultimately became a national news story which threatened to seriously damage the standing of Catholic colonisation and its leaders occurred over a very short period. The dramatic story unfolded in December 1880 and January 1881. With the reputations of

<sup>491</sup> *Austrian* shipping list, Massachusetts department of Archives

respected community leaders at risk, the opposing sides became entrenched. In an effort to persuade public opinion, a large amount of newspaper coverage was afforded the issue. To understand the brief time spent by Nugent's immigrants in Bigstone County, the incident has been divided into three parts; the initial discontentment, the hardship of winter and the resulting responses to the hardship.

### **Initial Signs of Unhappiness**

The first signs of discontentment among the immigrants and the residents of Graceville came within six weeks of their arrival. In August 1880 the *Morris Stevens County Tribune* stated the immigrants were in a destitute condition with no food and no work: 'They are but illy provided with clothes or shelter'. It was stated many of Nugent's immigrants were leaving with some arriving in Morris in search of work. The condition of the immigrants was described as 'deplorable' while the scheme to bring the immigrants to Minnesota was described as a 'terrible blunder'. 'It does not seem possible that large numbers of poor families were brought here late in the season and left to starve and freeze to death on the prairies'.<sup>492</sup> In response John Ireland stated that under his supervision work was available for the immigrants and as such the immigrants were not in want. John Ireland accused the informants of the newspaper article of having 'willfully misrepresented the situation'.<sup>493</sup> According to Ireland those that went to Morris only did so because of higher wages which had been promised by a contractor in a letter he had read to the immigrants. Ireland acknowledged the winter was going to be difficult 'when they will be found to be actually, without fault of their's, reduced to suffering'.<sup>494</sup> John Ireland further accepted the immigrants were his responsibility and that he 'was fully prepared to bear the consequences'.<sup>495</sup> However, Ireland was not prepared to support any immigrant who was not willing to work: 'those who do not work, and those only, so far as I am concerned, will be left to starve'.<sup>496</sup> According to Ireland, the Connemara colonists were 'as a rule, good, industrious people. Unfortunately a few of them are not as well disposed as their companions. They would desire to live without work'.<sup>497</sup>

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<sup>492</sup> *Morris Stevens County Tribune*, 19 August 1880

<sup>493</sup> *Morris Stevens County Tribune*, 26 August 1880

<sup>494</sup> *Morris Stevens County Tribune*, 26 August 1880

<sup>495</sup> *Morris Stevens County Tribune*, 26 August 1880

<sup>496</sup> *Morris Stevens County Tribune*, 26 August 1880

<sup>497</sup> *Morris Stevens County Tribune*, 26 August 1880



With confidence John Ireland responded to the concerns raised by the *The Pioneer Press* and the *St Paul Daily Globe*. He stated he had visited the colonists one week earlier and questioned, ‘how could people be starving in Big Stone county, where – for the present at least – workmen are too few to save the harvest?’<sup>498</sup> Once more John Ireland reiterated, ‘if any colonist were to be in want it would be simply because he is not willing to work’.<sup>499</sup>

In a letter to John Sweetman on 2 September 1880, Bishop Ireland did not outline any difficulties with Nugent’s immigrants. Sweetman met John Ireland in 1879 and subsequently decided to purchase 20,000 acres in Murray County, Minnesota, which was south of Big Stone County. In September John Ireland informed Sweetman the sale of land was to go ahead. With friendship and respect Ireland wrote to Sweetman, ‘I am daily becoming more and more interested in what you are doing for colonization. I cannot view your voyage to America last summer in any other light than as a special Providence for our people’.<sup>500</sup>

On September 15 1880, a reception was held at the St Paul Opera House in honour of Father Nugent under the auspices of the Catholic Temperance Societies of the cities.<sup>501</sup> Having just returned from Graceville, Nugent and Ireland wrote to *The Morris Stevens County Tribune*. Nugent described the immigrants as having lived as paupers dependent upon charity: ‘As will be readily seen, no charitable policy will be successful with these people, and it is consequently necessary that they be treated altogether differently. They will have to be educated to work and become self-supporting’.<sup>502</sup> According to Nugent, ‘if these people, born and trained as paupers, were to have the impression that they could live without work, the whole scheme of making them what they should be would fail’.<sup>503</sup> Nugent felt it was only natural for the immigrants ‘to be indolent, lazy and shiftless, when they could fare fully as well as if they earned their living’.<sup>504</sup> Nugent further stated the improved condition of the immigrants was ‘astonishing and marvellous to one acquainted with their previous circumstances. They are contented, are becoming industrious and are satisfied with their homes in the west’.<sup>505</sup> At this stage three families had left the colony, five were working for John Ireland and five families without children were not earning wages. The young people

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<sup>498</sup>*The St Paul Pioneer Press*, 28 August 1880; *St. Paul Daily Globe*, 24 August, 1880 the Helen Angela Hurley compilation, [The John Ireland Collection] section I notes and citations 1838-1889 of the MN Historical Society’s Manuscripts Collection CBA I65 Box 1.

<sup>499</sup> Ibid

<sup>500</sup> Letter from John Ireland to John Sweetman, 2 September 1880 found in the Sweetman Family Papers, National Library of Ireland, Collection List No. 156, MS 47,598/2

<sup>501</sup> *St Paul Daily Globe*, 15 September 1880

<sup>502</sup> *Morris Stevens County Tribune*, 16 September, 1880

<sup>503</sup> *Morris Stevens County Tribune*, 16 September, 1880

<sup>504</sup> *Morris Stevens County Tribune*, 16 September, 1880

<sup>505</sup> *Morris Stevens County Tribune*, 16 September, 1880

who had remained in St Paul had by this time sent \$800. The few families who had remained in St Paul were to take up the settlements of those who had left when spring arrived. John Ireland hoped the public did not unintentionally ‘thwart his plans’, as according to Ireland there was ample support for the immigrants, while those who left or were planning to leave were not deserving of aid. According to Ireland, ‘charity in their case would be as liquor to an inebriate’.<sup>506</sup>

In October 1880, *The Chicago Times* interviewed Nugent and asked of his immigrants in Graceville to which Nugent responded, ‘their situation is immeasurably superior to what it was, or would have been in the old country’.<sup>507</sup>

As winter approached, labour was no longer required as each season brought its own demands and responses. Harvest offered a demand for labour, while the preparation for winter was prioritised. Curing and storing food and banking homes to insulate them from the freezing temperatures along with gathering fuel were some of the main priorities of Minnesota prairie living. Nugent’s immigrants had no experience of the harshness of Minnesotan winters and could not have possibly imagined how low the temperatures reached in the Mid-Western region of America. The west of Ireland presented challenges where people died of starvation but this possibility was secondary to Minnesotans whose survival depended upon avoiding exposure to harsh winters, wild animals and hostile natives. Some of Nugent’s immigrants saw no need to farm as incomes were readily available as farm labourers and as such allegedly sold the seed and implements given to them by John Ireland. Although the immigrants had been warned of the severity of the winters and the need to sod the exterior of the frame house this was not done by many families.

In further correspondence to John Sweetman on 13 November 1880, Bishop Ireland expressed his gratitude to Sweetman from whom he had received a cheque for \$1,000. Ireland stated there was no immediate need of the money but was grateful to have it at his disposal ‘should the need arise’. Ireland informed Sweetman that his contract for land was favourable as the Avoca lands in Murray County were increasing in price. No mention was afforded Nugent’s immigrants although other aspects of colonisation efforts are mentioned. Ireland suggests distributing a colonization pamphlet in Ireland with Sweetman’s assistance.<sup>508</sup>

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<sup>506</sup> *Morris Stevens County Tribune*, 16 September, 1880

<sup>507</sup> *St Paul Daily Globe*, 4 October 1880

<sup>508</sup> Letter from John Ireland to John Sweetman, 13 November 1880 found in the Sweetman Family Papers, NLI, Collection List No. 156, MS 47,598/2

As can be seen, the concerns raised in the autumn of 1880 were directed against Nugent's immigrants who were labelled paupers. No consideration was given to the circumstances which forced the immigrants to leave Ireland. The expectations of the immigrant families and those of the colonisation leaders differed. The immigrants had an expectation that their needs would be accommodated during their first year in Minnesota while the colonisation leaders expected the immigrants to respond to the generosity provided with a spirit of independence. This same expected independence would ultimately lead to self-sufficiency.

### **The Severe Winter of 1880**

As winter settled over Minnesota the situation of the immigrants worsened. The winter of 1880 was to be one of the severest winters recorded in Minnesotan history and began with a series of unprecedented storms in October. On 9 December the Morris Board of Trade sent Henry Hutchins, a justice of the peace of Morris to examine the condition of Nugent's immigrants. Hutchins and his colleague George McPherson visited twenty-five families and found 'all of these families in a terrible state of destitution, filth and suffering'. Of the one hundred and thirty-seven children he encountered nearly all with the exception of five or six were barefoot. 'Many of the adults are old and feeble, and most of them have the same haggard look which some of us have seen in the faces of those who were starved in rebel prison pens'.<sup>509</sup> According to the report prepared by the Morris Board of Trade, one resident Edward Melia was found badly frozen lying on the floor in the corner of the shanty, on filthy rags, with no covering while a young girl aged sixteen was found on a bank of boards, badly frozen also without covering. The remaining children were half frozen while the older female of the house had only recovered from a cruel freezing she had received in November. At another home the seventeen members of the O'Flaherty and the Maguire families were residing together as the Maguires' family home had burned to the ground along with their belongings and \$70 in cash.<sup>510</sup>

The article further claimed some of Nugent's immigrants had sought assistance and aid from the resident priest Father Ryan. It was alleged that one man's hands, feet, face and ears were severely frozen after he had walked thirteen miles to Graceville to Ryan's house. It was stated the priest called him a vile name and ordered him to be off and in response the

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<sup>509</sup> *The Morris Tribune*, December 10, 1880

<sup>510</sup> *The Morris Tribune*, December 10, 1880

gentleman pleaded with the priest, 'Father my wife and children are starving and freezing and will be soon be dead unless you send them food and fuel', to which Ryan was alleged to have stated, 'when they die I will bury them'.<sup>511</sup> Another immigrant John Maguire was also frozen badly on his hands and face while travelling to inform Ryan of the house fire. Maguire had asked the priest's permission to move into a vacant shanty but was refused. Further accounts of poor treatment by Ryan were reported. Coleman Malone had worked sixteen days for the priest, who promised him one dollar per day and his dinner, but when the work was done, all he received was a bag of corn meal. With each encounter the families described themselves as being destitute: one woman stated that she asked the priest for shoes to attend mass but was told to go home and not to attend mass until fine weather. Mrs Greeley who also asked the priest for footwear was told 'put your hands in your pockets and take out your money and buy them'.<sup>512</sup> The lack of clothing, shoes and provisions for the Minnesota winter is foremost in the report.

By way of a report to Mr Hutchins, the Board of Trade maintained it was a blunder to have brought 'such a class of indigent, improvident, helpless paupers, when many thrifty, industrious and intelligent persons ... would have gladly availed themselves of an opportunity to get a good start in the new world'.<sup>513</sup> It was stated the immigrants should never have been brought to the U.S. or Minnesota. The investigators further stated 'not much dependence can be put upon the statements of these Connemaras, but as the investigators had viewed the destitution for themselves the report was claimed to be truthfully presented'. In justifying the investigation as a timely and proper act the committee stated the rumours of hardship that were indigently denied, 'did not silence or stifle the many stories afloat, on the contrary they increased and continued to grow ... until at last it was determined to probe the matter to the core, and ascertain positively the true condition of affairs'.<sup>514</sup> The committee finished by insisting on the authenticity of the report: each family was visited unexpectedly and unannounced. After reading the report it was decided that a copy was to be sent to Governor Pillsbury and Bishop Ireland.

In response to the destitution, the people of surrounding areas immediately sent clothing, shoes and provisions to the immigrants. Col. Dunlap, George McPherson and Hutchins distributed one thousand pounds of flour, one barrel of pork, one hundred pounds of salt, one hundred and seventy-five pounds of fresh beef, sugar, tea, and dried apples. This

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<sup>511</sup> *The Morris Tribune*, December 10, 1880

<sup>512</sup> *The Morris Tribune*, December 10, 1880

<sup>513</sup> *The Morris Tribune*, December 10, 1880

<sup>514</sup> *The Morris Tribune*, December 10, 1880

was only enough for a maximum of ten days. An additional note in the report stated Edward Melia did not tell the truth when the inspectors visited. He had received \$30 only days before from his children in the city and had purchased \$5 worth of flour. It was the opinion of Mr. O'Neil who owned the grocery store with Mr. S. Costello that Melia and others 'would say anything if they thought they would gain by it'.<sup>515</sup> However, Hutchins and McPherson felt their visible starvation contradicted this claim. Hutchins telegraphed his report to *The Pioneer Press* and *The Minneapolis Tribune* and the suffering of Nugent's immigrants was reported on 11 December 1880. The immigrants were once more described as 'ignorant and improvident people', and it was stated that Ryan and others in charge should have 'taken some means to prevent the suffering' the immigrants had endured.<sup>516</sup> *The Minneapolis Tribune* stated Father Ryan expressed great indignation at the interference of the people of Morris.<sup>517</sup>

In reply to the Morris Board of Trade report, *The Pioneer Press* identified the difficulties the immigrants faced due to being unfamiliar with the rigours of a Minnesotan climate and the necessity of having prepared sufficiently for such harsh winters. The claims of hardship in the report were identified by O'Brien and Ireland as grossly exaggerated and without foundation. O'Brien outlined how in early autumn he had visited the immigrants and instructed them to sod their homes and dig cellars to preserve potatoes. The immigrants had been offered employment at cutting wood at Lake Toqua which was to be used for fuel but the immigrants did not sod the houses and only a small number availed of the opportunity to cut wood. According to O'Brien the difficulty was making the immigrants do anything for themselves. Money had been sent to the families by the young men and women working in the city but a difficulty arose when providing those without income with some assistance as the families who had received money demanded equal treatment. O'Brien further claimed firewood and potatoes had been sent to the immigrants on 3 December and that John Ireland had instructed Father Ryan to spare no expense to prevent the immigrants' suffering. Ryan had confirmed to O'Brien that two car loads of wood had arrived on December 5 and that he had distributed it to the immigrants. O'Brien outlined how the \$5,000 collected for the immigrants had been spent as the charitable funding had been questioned the previous day. O'Brien called upon Governor Pillsbury to appoint an independent investigator to examine

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<sup>515</sup> *The Morris Tribune*, December 10, 1880

<sup>516</sup> *The Pioneer Press*, 11 December, 1880

<sup>517</sup> *The Minneapolis Tribune*, 11 December, 1880

the situation.<sup>518</sup> O'Brien and Ireland were supported by John Rody, one of Nugent's immigrants who stated there was no suffering with the exception of one man who had walked from Morris to Graceville. He also held the report to be an exaggeration.<sup>519</sup> Another Connemara immigrant, Colin Eggleston a railroad employee, arrived at the office of *The Pioneer Press* in St Paul and informed them that he had left Graceville days before and knew of nothing that was likely to lead to immediate suffering in the colony.<sup>520</sup>

As the pitiful story of the immigrants unfolded in the Minnesota press John Ireland received a further \$2,000 from John Sweetman. John Ireland outlined to Sweetman how he intended to travel to Avoca the following day. Ireland further states Sweetman 'will find things satisfactory next April',<sup>521</sup> which is an indication of Sweetman's intentions to assist immigrants to Minnesota in the spring of 1881. Ireland was assisting Sweetman in his land deals and informed him, 'I have parties engaged to endeavour to purchase at lowest figure the lands you describe in your letter'.<sup>522</sup> For the first time Ireland mentioned his colony in Graceville: 'my Connemara colony is giving me some trouble. Meddlesome parties from Morris have gone out to enquire into their condition and of course my good colonists hoping to secure more alms made a poor mouth'.<sup>523</sup> Ireland stated the immigrants were 'very comfortable, with an abundance of fuel and food, lacking simply luxuries which the better classes of tenant-farmers never have at home'.<sup>524</sup> Ireland robustly warned Sweetman to avoid 'beggars and those who would not be ashamed to beg' by underlining the words 'beggars' and 'ashamed to beg'.<sup>525</sup>

By December the plight of poor immigrants brought from Ireland to Minnesota who found themselves in further destitution began to seep into the national media. *The Pilot* in Boston repeated a story which appeared in *The Pioneer Press* on the 17 December. It was claimed a letter was sent to a gentleman in St Paul from Father Ryan in Graceville describing

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<sup>518</sup> *The Pioneer Press*, 12 December, 1880

<sup>519</sup> *The Pioneer Press*, 12 December, 1880

<sup>520</sup> *The Pioneer Press*, 12 December, 1880

<sup>521</sup> Letter from John Ireland to John Sweetman, 12 December 1880 found in the Sweetman Family Papers, NLI, Collection List No. 156, MS 47,598/2

<sup>522</sup> Letter from John Ireland to John Sweetman, 12 December 1880 found in the Sweetman Family Papers, NLI, Collection List No. 156, MS 47,598/2

<sup>523</sup> Letter from John Ireland to John Sweetman, 12 December 1880 found in the Sweetman Family Papers, NLI, Collection List No. 156, MS 47,598/2

<sup>524</sup> Letter from John Ireland to John Sweetman, 12 December 1880 found in the Sweetman Family Papers, NLI, Collection List No. 156, MS 47,598/2

<sup>525</sup> Letter from John Ireland to John Sweetman, 12 December 1880 found in the Sweetman Family Papers, NLI, Collection List No. 156, MS 47,598/2

Ryan's encounter with a representative of the Morris board of trade. The profanity used in the letter ensures the letter appears sensational.<sup>526</sup>

My dear Mr. \_\_\_\_\_, Thinking the Right Rev. Bishop may not have returned as yet, I wish to lay before you the following facts, so that you may have timely notice to act as you think best.

On last Friday afternoon I was visited by an individual, when the following dialogue took place between us:-

Q. Are you Father Ryan?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. I am a representative sent out by the Board of Trade to Morris to investigate into the condition of these poor immigrants.

A. Very kind of said board:

Q. I find that they are actually starving under the noses of yourself and Bishop Ireland.

A. It is not so. They are well provided with fire-wood and provisions. What has the Board of Trade of Morris or people of Morris ever expended on those people?

Rep. Nothing in the past, but they will do so in the future.

A. Very kind of Morris people.

Rep. You're a G\_\_\_\_\_ d\_\_\_\_\_ s\_\_\_\_\_ of a b\_\_\_\_\_

A. You're a gentleman, sir.

Rep. You're a G\_\_\_\_\_ d\_\_\_\_\_ s\_\_\_\_\_ of a w\_\_\_\_\_ b\_\_\_\_\_.

A. If I were not a priest you would not speak thus.

Rep. Forget that you are a priest.

A. No sir, not for you.

Ryan stated the Morris representative proceeded to the colonisation agent, M. McDonald, who immediately went to assist the immigrants. Ryan noted in a disapproving tone, this was, 'nice conduct for the agent of the lordship'. Ryan felt those who attempted to assist 'were innocent parties to a disgraceful undertaking. The whole proceeding has been concocted between the so called Board of Trade of Morris, on the one part, and between several other men, on the second part, for what purpose I leave it to yourself in this nefarious

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<sup>526</sup> *The St Paul Pioneer Press*, 17 December 1880; *The Pilot*, 25 December 1880

business, to be the person to unravel'.<sup>527</sup> Ryan declared there was not even a 'shadow of suffering among the Connemaras', and challenged any party to prove otherwise.<sup>528</sup>

The opinion of the editor of *The Pioneer Press* is interesting to note as this publication did not provide the level of enthusiasm which other publications did when Parnell visited the Mid-West. Further *The Pioneer Press* championed the efforts of the *New York Herald* relief fund. As such had the publication held opinions that opposed Catholic colonisation then the case of Nugent's immigrants presented as excellent opportunity to denounce such schemes. However, James M. Golrick, editor of the *Pioneer Press*, criticised Hutchins and stated charity work is often undertaken in silence. According to Golrick, the Board of Trade had sought 'to blow a trumpet not only blazoning forth their good action, but loudly denouncing others for their neglect'.<sup>529</sup> Golrick further outlined how the unexpected cold weather had placed a strain on all colonies with regard to fuel but the quick action of railroad managers had averted much hardship. Golrick added that ever since the building of a branch railroad to Graceville the Morris people 'felt hurt, injured in business, and when you touch the people's pocket you touch a sore point'.<sup>530</sup> Golrick felt it was imperative that everyone help those in need, 'without making our charity the medium of venting petty spite and personal bickerings'.<sup>531</sup>

Once more it can be seen the lack of understanding of what was expected of Nugent's immigrants and the role of the Colonisation Bureau is very much evident. In addition, the poverty of the immigrants was misunderstood. The emaciated features of the immigrants alarmed those who were concerned for their welfare but these same features were possibly carved from the lean years of the late 1870s and not an immediate result of hardship on the prairie. Attempts to blame the Colonisation Bureau did not gather much traction which would suggest the credibility of the organisation remained intact. No publication denounced the Colonisation Bureau, its leaders, or their efforts to attract Catholics to the west. Although, an opportunity was created by the Morris Board of Trade, no other credible organisation, publication or person of influence added to the sensational claims. The reaction of the Colonisation Bureau was hugely important and in order to retain the integrity of the bureau the response to the crisis had to be at the very least credible.

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<sup>527</sup> *The St Paul Pioneer Press*, 17 December 1880; *The Pilot*, 25 December, 1880

<sup>528</sup> *The St Paul Pioneer Press*, 17 December 1880; *The Pilot*, 25 December, 1880

<sup>529</sup> *The St Paul Pioneer Press*, 17 December 1880; *The Pilot*, 25 December, 1880

<sup>530</sup> *The St Paul Pioneer Press*, 17 December 1880; *The Pilot*, 25 December, 1880

<sup>531</sup> *The St Paul Pioneer Press*, 17 December 1880; *The Pilot*, 25 December, 1880



## Response to the Crisis

Following consultation between the Bishop and the Governor, it was decided that Dillon O'Brien would go to Graceville and investigate the situation with Leonard B. Hodges which was seen as a credible response. However, when Hodges returned from Graceville he wrote to *The Pioneer Press* on the 18 December: 'I have seen with my own eyes a condition of squalid poverty and human suffering rarely found in any civilized community, disgraceful alike to the State, to the Colonisation Bureau and the resident priest'.<sup>532</sup> Ryan was described as 'a heartless brute and an accomplished liar', Hodges further noted it was 'folly for the clergy or their friends to deny longer or misrepresent or conceal the true state of affairs in the Connemara colony'.<sup>533</sup>

As Hodges's correspondence appeared in the press in Minnesota, John Ireland was already engaged in efforts to limit the damage to the colony by the Morris Board of Trade. Ireland wrote to the *Chicago Times* stating the reports of the Graceville colony were a 'falsehood' and held the facts had been grossly exaggerated with Mr. Hutchins accused of misstating the condition of the colonists. *The New York Tribune* stated there was an 'indignant denial' from John Ireland and that reports from Graceville were grossly misrepresented.<sup>534</sup> In a letter to *The St Paul Globe*, Ireland stated the difficulties were a result of 'jealousy on the part of the village of Morris' towards the Graceville colony. Ireland claimed the report was malicious and that the people of Morris had exaggerated some facts and 'absolutely invented others'.<sup>535</sup> William Onahan, outlined to *The New York Herald* how the immigrants sold the clothes they had been provided with and were 'so possessed ... with the idea that having brought them from Ireland the Bishop was bound to provide for them, and they could not be induced to do anything for themselves'.<sup>536</sup>

Hodges's damning report was published in the media on 21 December as was a separate report from Dillon O'Brien. At the outset it had been decided that Hodges and O'Brien would investigate the situation together but this did not occur as Hodges was unable to travel immediately with O'Brien. With O'Brien in Morris, Hodges followed and en route he read the Morris Board of Trade report in *The Pioneer Press*. Hodges later stated, 'I had good reason to believe the report substantially true, my business having kept me in the neighbourhood of the alleged suffering most of my time ever since the Connemara crowd

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<sup>532</sup> *The St Paul Pioneer Press*, 18 December 1880

<sup>533</sup> *The St Paul Pioneer Press*, 18 December 1880

<sup>534</sup> *The Saint Paul Globe*, 20 December, 1880; *New York Tribune*, 18 December 1880

<sup>535</sup> *The Saint Paul Daily Globe*, 20 December 1880

<sup>536</sup> *The New York Herald*, 21 December, 1880, p. 5

settled there'.<sup>537</sup> Hodges made plans to travel with Hutchins, McPherson and O'Brien on Thursday morning. The men from Morris were included as they were aware of which families were in urgent need. When O'Brien arrived in Morris on Tuesday night, Hutchins went to see him and O'Brien informed him that he was not willing to travel in his company. As opposed to viewing this action as an offence towards Hutchins, instead Hodges stated, 'if anyone could fool me into having anything to do in getting up a whitewashing report then they were mistaken in their man ... when I found O'Brien had blundered, had fallen in the hands of Ryan, the priest, and was counselling with him, I took the bit in my own mouth'.<sup>538</sup>

Hodges travelled to the immigrant's homesteads with Hutchins and sent a note to O'Brien to meet him on the prairies the following morning but no meeting took place. After visiting the immigrants Hodges stated it was beyond his power 'to convey an adequate idea of the hopelessness and despair of these poor people'.<sup>539</sup> While Hodges had grave concerns for Anthony Connelly who he felt was beyond recovery, not all immigrants were utterly destitute. The Gallaghers from Aughagower were described as 'respectable, industrious people'. Austin Reddy informed Hodges that Ryan would only give his family aid when they got the cow out of the shanty and the roof shingled. When Hodges visited the home of John Coyne the following day he met up with Dillon O'Brien.<sup>540</sup> Hodges's overall assessment was that Bishop Ireland had blundered in importing the Connemaras and in leaving them to the tender mercies of the priest Ryan.<sup>541</sup>

When O'Brien presented his report he stated that he had requested Hodges to accompany him to Graceville as there was 'no one in Minnesota I had a greater respect for than Mr Hodges'.<sup>542</sup> Bishop Ireland had requested that Hodges travel with O'Brien. The difficulty which seems to have developed between Hodges and O'Brien followed on from O'Brien's meeting with Ryan. O'Brien was dissatisfied with Hutchins who had privately investigated the condition of the immigrants without informing the priest Ryan. As O'Brien argued, 'who would go to investigate charges against the Board of Trade of Morris and go

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<sup>537</sup> *The Saint Paul Globe*, 21 December 1880, *The Saint Paul and Minneapolis Pioneer Press*, 21 December 1880

<sup>538</sup> *The Saint Paul Globe*, 21 December 1880, *The Saint Paul and Minneapolis Pioneer Press*, 21 December 1880

<sup>539</sup> *The Saint Paul Globe*, 21 December 1880, *The Saint Paul and Minneapolis Pioneer Press*, 21 December 1880

<sup>540</sup> *The Saint Paul Globe*, 21 December 1880, *The Saint Paul and Minneapolis Pioneer Press*, 21 December 1880

<sup>541</sup> *The Saint Paul Globe*, 21 December 1880, *The Saint Paul and Minneapolis Pioneer Press*, 21 December 1880

<sup>542</sup> *The Saint Paul Globe*, 21 December 1880, *The Saint Paul and Minneapolis Pioneer Press*, 21 December 1880

through it without ever notifying the board?'<sup>543</sup> O'Brien stated Hodges had broken his promise to Bishop Ireland by not meeting with him which 'put a miserable blotch upon an honourable life. L.B. Hodges, breaking faith and word to please two or three village bigots, is a figure it saddens me to contemplate'.<sup>544</sup> O'Brien attempted to discredit Hutchins by stating he had fabricated Mrs Connelly's words and the Irish brogue applied by Hutchins was 'a skilful touch' but stated the conversation could not have occurred as none of the Connelly family spoke English.<sup>545</sup> A further allegation by Hutchins stated a young boy was harmed having travelled to Graceville from his home to request provisions from Ryan. This was refuted by O'Brien who stated the young boy had been injured from exposure a number of months previously when he travelled on foot from Morris to Graceville and got lost on the prairie in freezing conditions for two days. According to O'Brien, John Ireland had paid \$23 for medical attention for this boy to return him to full health. O'Brien stated Nugent's immigrants would not become a burden to the state and that no one regretted 'the mistake of bringing these unfortunate people here more than those who brought them'. In conclusion O'Brien stated the immigrants were a burden to the bureau, 'many of them are wholly unreliable, and have all the cunning which a life of pauperism gives'.<sup>546</sup> The immigrants had received 17 registered letters with money from their children in the city of St Paul and upwards of \$900 had been spent with one trader alone, Mr. M.R. Kantz. According to O'Brien the immigrants had cautioned Kantz against informing Ryan of their spending.<sup>547</sup>

In addition to his report, O'Brien's submitted a report on behalf of the Graceville people who had established a committee chaired by the local post master, Mr. Burke, who had been outspoken and bitter in his opposition to Nugent's immigrants. It was thought that by including Mr Burke on the committee, a fair and non-biased report favourable to the Colonisation Bureau would be produced. Burke was accompanied by two farmers from Graceville, J.D. Crowe and P.D. O'Phelan. A number of interviews conducted with the families were repeated in the newspapers. The Gallaghers were pleased they had emigrated to Graceville and with Father Ryan's treatment. One son had sent \$40 from St Paul and John

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<sup>543</sup> *The Saint Paul Globe*, 21 December 1880, *The Saint Paul and Minneapolis Pioneer Press*, 21 December 1880

<sup>544</sup> *The Saint Paul Globe*, 21 December 1880, *The Saint Paul and Minneapolis Pioneer Press*, 21 December 1880

<sup>545</sup> *The Saint Paul Globe*, 21 December 1880, *The Saint Paul and Minneapolis Pioneer Press*, 21 December 1880

<sup>546</sup> *The Saint Paul Globe*, 21 December 1880, *The Saint Paul and Minneapolis Pioneer Press*, 21 December 1880

<sup>547</sup> *The Saint Paul Globe*, 21 December 1880, *The Saint Paul and Minneapolis Pioneer Press*, 21 December 1880

Gallagher, the father of the family was also employed. Mrs Gallagher expressed great indignation at the families that were not inclined to work.<sup>548</sup> The majority of families did not appear in dire distress but some homes were not shingled which was a skilled job and required a carpenter. Edward Melia and his family were considered by the Graceville committee to be unreliable and not capable of taking care of themselves. It was further thought the Melia family would only suffer if left on the prairie. In concluding the report the committee reported that Father Ryan requested the parishioners in Graceville use their influence to have him relieved from the burden of having to attend to the personal wants of the immigrant families known as the Connemara settlers.<sup>549</sup>

John Ireland under considerable pressure to end the alarming tales of prairie hardship wrote to *The Pioneer Press* on 22 December. Ireland described Nugent's immigrants as 'at best an improvident and worthless class of citizens'.<sup>550</sup> He further stated the immigrants were paupers for the most part who were totally demoralised and 'unmanned' from years of suffering. Regardless of their lack of admirable qualities Ireland stated he loved the immigrants as they were Irishmen and if they were demoralised and improvident it was not the fault of the Irish race but the fruits of the suffering they had endured. He outlined how the immigrants were unwilling to work from the outset, even during the harvest some of the immigrants were seen loitering around the prairies with the expectation that the Colonisation Bureau would cater for their every need. 'Some of them have even gone so far as to invite their children home from St. Paul ... telling them that living was free in Big Stone County'.<sup>551</sup> Ireland outlined how the immigrants had been provided for and stated Ryan had carried out his 'exact regulations'. To have done any more would have been folly according to Ireland. Ireland admitted there was a shortage of firewood due to the unexpected cold weather in Graceville but stated that even when old settlers could not receive firewood from the railway company, wagons continued to supply Nugent's immigrants. Some of the immigrants had hidden the firewood when Hodges undertook his investigation. According to Ireland the immigrants had enough meal and potatoes and it was the immigrants who allowed the

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<sup>548</sup> *The Saint Paul Globe*, 21 December 1880, *The Saint Paul and Minneapolis Pioneer Press*, 21 December 1880

<sup>549</sup> *The St Paul Pioneer Press*, 21 December, 1880; *The Boston Pilot*, 1 January 1880

<sup>550</sup> *The St Paul Pioneer Press*, 23 December, 1880; *The Boston Pilot*, 1 January 1880

<sup>551</sup> *The St Paul Pioneer Press*, 23 December, 1880; *The Boston Pilot*, 1 January 1880

potatoes to freeze. The young men and women who had found work in St Paul had remitted \$1,000 to \$2,000 to the families in Graceville. Ireland stated he did not accuse others of wilful misrepresentations as he felt it was the immigrants who had tricked the investigators. He did, however, blame Hutchins and his friends for ‘not pushing their investigations beyond mere appearances – for not giving hearing to the other side ... I blame them, too, for not quietly telling me of the supposed need of provisions, without sending the news to the four corners of the earth’.<sup>552</sup>

With regard to Hutchins, Ireland accused him of desiring only ‘loud charity’ as when the young boy was found frozen a few miles outside of Morris it was the colonization bureau and not the Morris Board of Trade who paid for the doctor and the hotel stay. With regard to Hodges, Ireland stated he had never wished for a whitewashing report but the fact remained that he had not received Hodge’s report; instead it had been submitted to *The Pioneer Press* and the St Paul Chamber of Commerce neither of which had requested he travel to Graceville. Ireland expressed his satisfaction with Dillon O’Brien’s report and that of the Graceville committee.<sup>553</sup> Ireland stated he would continue to provide for the wants of the 24 families assisted by Nugent, ‘even doing in the future more for them than my judgement will allow me, but compelled to do so to avoid outcries and investigations’.<sup>554</sup>

On 30 December, L. B. Hodges responded to O’Brien’s report and John Ireland’s lengthy explanation of events in *The Pioneer Press*. Hodges identified O’Brien and John Ireland as good friends. He stated O’Brien had virtually branded him a liar and accused him of bad faith.<sup>555</sup> The offences were taken seriously by Hodges; a further statement was produced by Hutchins. However, in this instance, the statement was witnessed by Hon. J. D. Good who had been a member of the Minnesota state legislature in 1877, Sheriff John Landberg, Deputy Sheriff, W. L. Colyer, C. A. Sprandel and J. M. Thompson. This effort by Hodges was to provide credibility not only to Hutchins statement but also to the reports he had produced. Hutchins’s statement was sworn in front of a public notary, George A. Overton and a Justice of the Peace and railroad contractor Hezekiah Bragg. Hodges questioned the reliability of the Graceville committee and accused O’Brien and Ryan of

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<sup>552</sup> *The St Paul Pioneer Press*, 23 December, 1880; *The Boston Pilot*, 1 January 1880

<sup>553</sup> *The St Paul Pioneer Press*, 22 December, 1880; *The Boston Pilot*, 1 January 1880

<sup>554</sup> *The St Paul Pioneer Press*, 22 December, 1880; *The Boston Pilot*, 1 January 1880

<sup>555</sup> *The Saint Paul Daily Globe*, 30 December 1880

appointing the committee ‘to conceal the facts’.<sup>556</sup> Hodges may have been correct in assuming the Graceville committee was biased towards the colonization bureau after all, most of the residents of Graceville had immigrated there because of John Ireland’s and Dillon O’Brien’s influence. Also, P.D. O’Phelan had lived in Webster, south of St Paul, where in 1876 he held the position of Second Vice-President of the Temperance Union.<sup>557</sup> The Temperance Society of Minnesota in the 1870s was clearly associated with men such as John Ireland and Dillon O’Brien.

In answering the charge as to why Hodges did not report the facts to Bishop Ireland on his return to St Paul, Hodges stated he has not been informed of the ‘preliminary monkeying to be done in Graceville before the investigation commenced, and not being polite enough to ask an introduction to a drowning man before pitching in and drawing him out, I lost no time in commencing work’.<sup>558</sup> As such Hodges prioritised the need of the immigrants when he arrived in Graceville and returned to St Paul while O’Brien and Ireland choose to take offence that the Bishop’s office had been ignored. Hodges stated he had intended to visit the Bishop as a priority. However when he discovered the Bishop had denounced him and accused him of falling in with bad company at Morris he was indignant. Hodges refused to visit the Bishop informing him he could avail of his report from the Chamber of Commerce.<sup>559</sup>

Trust had previously existed between Hodges and John Ireland, land deeds indicating Ireland had sold land to Hodges and his wife in May 1880 for \$400. This same land was sold back to John Ireland in January 1881 for \$500 following the episode with Nugent’s immigrants. The land was identified as the undivided one half of the NW¼ of the NE¼ of section 9, in township 124, range 46. This same parcel of land was subsequently subdivided, laid out and surveyed into blocks and lots in April 1881. From 1881 to 1891 the land belonged to the U.S. Government, John Ireland, the Fargo and Southern Railway Company and various individuals. In 1883 John Ireland retained full title to convey the lands and in 1901 John Ireland’s name last appeared on the title which was then identified as lot 12 block

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<sup>556</sup> *The Saint Paul Daily Globe*, 30 December 1880

<sup>557</sup> James M. Reardon, ‘The Catholic Total Abstinence Movement in Minnesota’, in *Acta Et Dicta*, The St Paul Catholic Historical Society, Vol II, July 1909, No. 1, p.88

<sup>558</sup> *The Saint Paul Daily Globe*, 30 December 1880

<sup>559</sup> *The St Paul Daily Globe*, 30 December 1880

1, King's Addition to the village of Graceville. As this land was sold from John Ireland to L.B. Hodges in 1880 it can only be assumed Hodges was assisting Ireland in acquiring land for colonization purposes as the parcel of land was considerable and required for an expanding township. Hodges sold the same parcel of land back to Ireland after seven months at a profit of \$100.<sup>560</sup>

As the crisis abated in the days before the New Year, letters continued to be printed in the media along with repeated accounts of articles printed in the Minnesota press. On 30 December 1880, John Farley a resident of Graceville wrote to his uncle in Princeton Minnesota. Farley identified the 'general worthlessness' of Nugent's immigrants which he claimed would provide sympathy for them. He further stated, 'The Connemaras are the talk of the day. They are a pest to the country. They are lying lazy paupers to boot'.<sup>561</sup> Farley stated the claims against Ryan were false which only served to bring disgrace upon Ryan and John Ireland. An 'indignation meeting over the affair' was to be held that night. It was Farley's opinion that the Connemaras fared better than the majority of the colony. According to Farley: 'they will never find their own living where they are; as they say: The bishop promised to support us, why should we work'.<sup>562</sup> On 31 December a correspondent of *The Minneapolis Tribune* travelled with Hutchins to witness the situation. The families were visited once more where similar findings of hardship were discovered in the homes of Edward Melia, Lawrence Flaherty, Greeley, Connelly, Malone and John Green.<sup>563</sup>

On 1 January, *The Pioneer Press* in an article noted the severe winter in Minnesota and with regard to the concerns of the immigrants in Graceville it ascertained no ground existed for apprehensions as Bishop Ireland received dispatches daily from his agents on the condition of the immigrants. Two teams were constantly employed in the transportation of food and fuel. In addition a special agent of Bishop Ireland, Father Nealis of St Paul was sent to spend three weeks with the colony to care for the immigrants. The publication outlined that the immigrants had money from summer work and from their children's employment in the city. 'It is safe to say that these people are far better provided for than the majority of new

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<sup>560</sup> Copy of land deed of property identified lot twelve, block one, Kings addition to the village of Graceville, located in Government lot one or the northwest quarter of the northeast quarter in section 9, township one hundred twenty four, range forty six, was provided by Mary Joe Suave of the corresponding address belonging to this property.

<sup>561</sup> *The Princeton Union*, 30 December 1880.

<sup>562</sup> Ibid

<sup>563</sup> *The Minneapolis Tribune*, 1 January 1881

and poor settlers'. *The Pioneer Press* stated it was a 'curious commentary on their reported destitution that some eight or ten of these girls have gone to spend the holidays with their Connemara parents, and to have a good time'. As a final note it was stated that measures were being taken to remove fifteen of the families from Graceville to other places.<sup>564</sup>

Nothing more was heard from the Morris Board of Trade or any voice denouncing the colonisation scheme from January 1881. Support continued for those suffering in Ireland and interest remained high with regard to Land League activities. The weekly St Paul Land League meeting in January noted \$13.50 sent from the Graceville branch of the League.<sup>565</sup> Further in January, Nugent wrote to Sweetman to inform him of how to avail of the best value in purchasing tickets for transport to Minnesota. Just as John Ireland had given Sweetman permission to use his name as required so did Nugent who recommended using his name or that of the Colonization Society when purchasing tickets.<sup>566</sup> In February 1881, the poor weather continued with blockages preventing deliveries of fuel in particular. On 10 March 1881 *The Globe* reported the Morris and Brown's Valley branch of the St Paul and Manitoba Railway had reopened from Morris to Graceville. The worst of the snow drifts had been cleared. *The Globe* further stated that the rumours during the early blockade as to extreme scarcity of fuel and provisions could not be confirmed. The paper confirmed the winter had been difficult for the poor settlers in the region but none had starved or froze.<sup>567</sup>

As stated by *The Pioneer Press*, Ireland arranged to have the settlers relocated and on April 2 1881 five families including ten adults and twenty children arrived in St. Paul. The Father Mathew and the Vincent De Paul Temperance societies prepared arrangements for their care. Father McGolrick did not wish to have the families housed together and requested three parishes to care for the families.<sup>568</sup> Five families remained in Graceville on the farms that Ireland had provided for them. This episode at Graceville ended when the families were provided with alternative homes. The families did not return to Ireland and as such were successful in their immigration attempts. However due to the direct link the immigrants had with Catholic colonisation in Minnesota it guaranteed that whenever the thousands of successful Catholic immigrants who settled in the Minnesotan prairie were considered then Nugent immigrants were recalled and identified as those who failed on the prairie.

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<sup>564</sup> *The St Paul Pioneer Press*, 1 January 1881

<sup>565</sup> *The St Paul Daily Globe*, January 28, 1881

<sup>566</sup> Letter from James Nugent to John Sweetman, 23 January 1880 found in the Sweetman Family Papers, NLI, Collection List No. 156, MS 47,599/3

<sup>567</sup> *The St Paul Daily Globe*, March 10, 1881

<sup>568</sup> *The St Paul Daily Globe*, 4 April, 1881



## The Nugent Immigrant Legacy

Nugent's colonisation efforts in Minnesota were not recalled after the summer of 1881 for fifty years. In the 1930s Nugent's immigrants were noted not in their right as immigrants but only in the context of Catholic colonisation. In 1933 Dillon O'Brien's son Thomas wrote an article regarding his father and the dealings he had with Nugent's immigrants. O'Brien stated Nugent had chosen 'not the competent but the most incompetent; not the industrious but the shiftless; a group composed of mendicants who knew nothing of farming, and were entirely unfitted to cope with life upon the American prairie'.<sup>569</sup> In 1934, Monsignor Moynihan stated John Ireland declared the 'incident was the greatest grief in his life'.<sup>570</sup> These statements have been since liberally applied to the account of Nugent's immigrants in Graceville; however it has not been considered that although Ireland may have said these very words he was not at a stage in his life to make such a pronouncement as within a number of decades John Ireland was to be involved in far greater crises such as labour disputes, the rights of Catholic schools in America and an international emergency which included the prevention of war between Spain and America. Further statements which condemned the immigrants included those which placed the death of Dillon O'Brien at the hands of the immigrants. Although Thomas O'Brien is the source of this inference he more accurately identifies the causation of death as a coronary-related illness. In a letter to W. H. Onahan he explained how his father succumbed to a sudden death similar to that which brought about his grandmother's death. According to his son, Dillon O'Brien's mother, 'died as sudden a death as father'.<sup>571</sup> Furthermore, it would seem O'Brien was not only ageing but tiring in the efforts

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<sup>569</sup> O'Brien, 'Dillon O'Brien' in *Acta Et Dicta*, October 1933, p. 50. James Shannon, *Catholic Colonization on the Western Frontier*, p. 157, (1953). Shannon states Thomas O'Brien's account is based on family reminiscences of Dillon O'Brien's remarks of Nugent's immigrants. Shannon's initial account of Nugent's immigrants was in response to an inaccurate account by Theodore Maynard, *The Catholic Church and the American Idea*, p. 220-1(1953); Shannon, 'Bishop Ireland's Connemara Experiment', in *Minnesota History* 35:5, p. 207, (1957); J. M. Reardon identifies the immigrants as mendicants in *The Catholic Church in the Diocese of St. Paul*, p. 242, (1952); as does J. H. Moynihan, *The Life of Archbishop Ireland*, p. 26, (1952); M.R. O'Connell, *John Ireland and the American Catholic Church*, p.150, (1988); Moran Gerard, "In Search of the Promised Land", The Connemara Colonization Scheme to Minnesota, 1880, in *Eire/Ireland*, (1997), p. 143.

<sup>570</sup> Humphrey Moynihan, Archbishop Ireland's Colonies, in *Acta Et Dicta*, October 1934, p. 222; Shannon, Bishop Ireland's Connemara Experiment, in *Minnesota History* 35:5, p. 213, (1957); Ann Regan, 'The Irish' in Holmquist, June D., ed., *They Chose Minnesota: A Survey of the State's Ethnic Groups*, (MHS, 1981), p. 139; Ann Regan, *Irish in Minnesota*, p. 24

<sup>571</sup> According to Shannon, Thomas O'Brien stated the disappointment of the incident 'contributed greatly to the sudden death of his father', in Bishop Ireland's Connemara Experiment, in *Minnesota History* 35:5, p. 213, (1957) while Ann Regan states 'O'Brien's son wrote that the strain of these events contributed to his father's sudden death', in *Irish in Minnesota*, p. 24; What is written by Thomas O'Brien is as follows: 'The incident was the cause of bitter sorrow both to John Ireland and Mr. O'Brien. The health of the latter, perhaps because of his advanced age, was visibly affected by the strain to which he was thus subjected', Dillon O'Brien in *Acta Et Dicta*, October 1933, p. 51; In a letter to W. J. Onahan, Thomas O'Brien was complying with a request from

of colonisation. In a letter in March 1881 Nugent discouraged Sweetman from using O'Brien to assist the colonists at their port of arrival; instead he suggested the Sweetman immigrants make their own way to Chicago: 'I do not think much will be gained by Mr. Dillon O'Brien coming down to conduct your people ... He is getting too advanced in years to be equal to an emergency, or to handle a large body of people'.<sup>572</sup>

As already stated, it would appear from the 1930s onwards the story of Nugent's immigrants was recalled only in the context of Catholic colonization and John Ireland's efforts in the Mid-West. The failure of the immigrants was the decisive summary told by the proponents of Catholic colonization in the Mid-West.<sup>573</sup> It was not until the 1990s and 2000s that an opposing opinion provided a greater understanding of the plight of the immigrants who were in essence refugees. Recent researchers include Bridget Connelly who is a descendant of Nugent's immigrants and Seósamh Ó Cuaig, a journalist from Connemara.<sup>574</sup> Prior to Connolly's *Forgetting Ireland*, the historical narrative was recorded according to a standard but rigid methodology. The traditional approach of researching and writing history was documentary-based where documentary evidence was the central focus. However, Connolly's approach and understanding provided the space to ask questions of the immigrant experience which had not been previously considered. Connolly places Nugent's immigrants and their struggle in Minnesota at the centre of the historical process. Earlier scholars focused on institutions, structures and 'Great Men'. The 1960s saw a shift in historical inquiry which led to what is identified today as 'bottom-up' history. The themes that are considered by Connolly examined the margins where the immigrants were placed. Connolly's use of oral accounts discovered a hidden history where questions arose and these same questions correlated with so many others that have been asked of Irish-Americans across the United States. The following section of this chapter will explore the new concepts that have arisen from Connolly's approach. However, before these new concepts are examined, a number of statements which have been made require further analysis. Although the statements are secondary to the story of Nugent's immigrants they are an example of how history

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John Ireland to provide information for a piece Onahan intended on writing for the *Irish Monthly* about Dillon O'Brien. William J. Onahan Papers, Minneapolis and St. Paul Archives, St. Paul MN.

<sup>572</sup> Letter from James Nugent to John Sweetman, 11 March 1881, National Library of Ireland, Sweetman Family Papers, collection list no 156, MS 47,599/3

<sup>573</sup> Monsignor James H. Moynihan was pastor of the Church of Incarnation in Minneapolis and was formerly president of the College of St. Thomas in St. Paul which Archbishop Ireland founded. James Riordan of the Archdiocese of St. Paul was ordained by John Ireland and served under for more than twenty years. James Shannon, was further a Catholic Priest and president of St. Thomas University.

<sup>574</sup> Bridget Connelly, *Forgetting Ireland*, is a descendant of one of the immigrant families. The documentary 'Graceville' was written by Bob Quinn and researched and narrated by Seósamh Ó Cuaig. The film and video company, Cinegaël, was established by Bob Quinn, Seosamh Ó Cuaig and Toni Cristofides in 1973.

unquestioned allows one view or opinion to fill the space and diffuse conversation. Whereas debates and opposing opinions engage and facilitate further discussion.

One claim which has remained unchallenged was the statement made by L.B. Hodges against Father Timothy Ryan. Hodges stated Ryan had his counterpart in the Rev. Edward Cowley of New York.<sup>575</sup> This would appear to be a remarkable statement to make and at this time too as Cowley, an Episcopalian clergyman who managed a charitable institution called the Shepherd's Fold was imprisoned in 1880 for having willingly starved a child. A disturbingly graphic description of Cowley's cruel treatment of children along with a description of a child's body and the effects of starvation were outlined by the *New York Times* a few days before Hodges gave his report. The comparison was a damning indictment and could only have been intended to inflict the greatest harm to Ryan's reputation. To have made such charges based on one visit indicates either the severity of the condition of the immigrants or highlights the little experience Hodges may have had with dealing with destitute people. The comparison was at the very least, extremely harsh, as Cowley bore the responsibility for helpless children who were unable to provide for themselves while Ryan, on the other hand did not bear the sole responsibility for the destitute condition of Nugent's immigrants.<sup>576</sup>

Ryan could be described as a victim of the power play between both sides of the debate. It should be remembered that Ryan was 32 years old in 1880 and had no experience of managing communities. Ryan's first appointment was Graceville where he was required to work as priest and land agent. All other priests such as Rev. Knauf in the Adrian colony had similar functions. Ryan died as a result of kidney failure in 1884 and may have been in poor health for a considerable time before his death. No one came to Ryan's defence throughout the scandal which could imply that he did not have the practical skills to manage the situation and was not the appropriate person to place in this position. John Ireland did state Ryan had carried out his direct instructions but sending Father Nealis to Graceville from St Paul to manage Nugent's immigrants served only to undermine Ryan. The only training Ryan would appear to have gained as a Catholic priest was theological training. He did not have the practical experience required to assist with the needs of destitute people. After he completed his Jesuit training in Limerick his only time in North America was spent in seminaries in Quebec and Cincinnati. A more experienced representative of the church might have prevented this matter from becoming a national news story which could have caused

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<sup>575</sup> *The Saint Paul and Minneapolis Pioneer Press*, 21 December 1880

<sup>576</sup> *The New York Times*, 18 January 1880

irreparable damage to the expansion of the Catholic Church in America.<sup>577</sup> In more recent studies Ryan continues to be singled out for harsh treatment, Connelly identifies Ryan as ‘a temperamental priest’ and ‘an angrily articulate Irishman’, however, it would seem not enough information is available to fully support this criticism.<sup>578</sup>

A second example of how misremembered details can add to or change the historical record of an individual can be found in Connelly’s *Forgetting Ireland* which relies heavily upon oral testimonies. Connelly states alcohol was introduced to Graceville in 1880 when the Main Street lots were sold: ‘This change of ownership, Graceville local history conventionally maintains, brought booze to town’. Connelly asserts that when Nugent’s immigrants arrived the town was ‘rife with bars’. ‘Brawling and public drunkenness were the major charges in the list of offences committed by the rowdy new emigrants from the legendarily toughest region of Ireland’.<sup>579</sup> Connelly correctly states Hodges had purchased John Ireland’s interest in the downtown business district of Graceville in 1880. According to Connelly, ‘This controversial sale also brought bars into the previously dry colony’.<sup>580</sup> But, as has been indicated previously, the exact lots which Hodges purchased from John Ireland in the summer of 1880 were sold back to John Ireland in January 1881. As such it would appear unlikely in the short space of time that public houses in Graceville were built, opened for business, survived the winter of 1880 and then closed, which could only have occurred when the lots were returned to John Ireland. In adding to the hypothesis that alcohol was available in Graceville, Connelly refers to an oral memory which outlined how alcohol and cigars were given to John Ireland.<sup>581</sup>

Although it cannot be stated with absolute authority that alcohol did not exist in Graceville in 1880-81, it would seem most unlikely that alcohol was legally available as the 1880 census indicated no public houses existed in Graceville at this time. Furthermore, as far as the Catholic Church in the U.S. and Ireland were concerned, alcohol destroyed communities and was a weapon used against the Irish in America. The structure of the temperance movement was well established in Minnesota by the 1870s. In June 1870, John Ireland was identified as the spiritual director of the Father Mathew Temperance Society

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<sup>577</sup> Records of Father Ryan. Minneapolis and St. Paul Archdiocese St. Paul.

<sup>578</sup> Connelly Bridget, *Forgetting Ireland*, p. 90-91

<sup>579</sup> Connelly Bridget, *Forgetting Ireland*, p. 209

<sup>580</sup> Connelly Bridget, *Forgetting Ireland*, p. 112

<sup>581</sup> Connelly, *Forgetting Ireland*, p. 57. In this account, oral testimony is provided by a female who recalled how, as a young girl, she was instructed to give alcohol to a priest noted as Father Kennedy but instead gave it to an old man on the porch whom she identified as John Ireland. See appendix for conversation.

which had a membership of 350 men.<sup>582</sup> At the third national convention of the Temperance Society in New York in 1873, John Ireland was elected Chairman of the committee on the address to the Holy Father and Vice President of the National Union.<sup>583</sup> By 1874 *The Minneapolis Tribune* noted a company of boys called 'Temperance Cadets' with 70 members. When the members became older they entered the 'Young Crusaders' another temperance order of the church.<sup>584</sup> In 1875 *The St Paul Daily Dispatch* described the annual temperance convention in Fairbault a 'brilliant success'.<sup>585</sup> Up to 1,000 men marched in St Paul in 1878 as part of a temperance society demonstration with Catholic Church leaders given credit for the spread of the temperance cause.<sup>586</sup>

Further, in January 1879 O'Brien and John Ireland celebrated ten years of the Father Mathew Temperance Society. By this time 120 branch societies had been established in the state of Minnesota.<sup>587</sup> In 1882, the *New York Times* described Ireland's settlements as having no liquor stores.<sup>588</sup> Graceville was identified as 'the homestead colony', and was noted to have been held in special regard by John Ireland. Graceville was an alcohol-free town closely connected with the temperance movement, and in 1883 the elected representatives of the town voted to continue with the tradition of not granting a liquor licence in Graceville.<sup>589</sup> In Liverpool in 1886, Ireland stated to an audience of the League of the Cross that he wished to have the 'courage to fight so long as God gives me life against the fearful vice of intemperance'. He further stated, 'as long as I may be able to uplift my arm it shall be uplifted in support of total abstinence, so long as my tongue may speak words, they shall be spoken in praise of total abstinence'.<sup>590</sup>

The likelihood that alcohol was available in a colony which was built by temperance members would seem very slight. Lastly, it cannot go unnoticed that in the vast amount of printed documentary evidence available with regard to Nugent's immigrants in Graceville from 1880-81, alcohol is not noted once. It would seem in all the efforts that were made to find fault with the immigrants that had alcohol been available it would have been negatively noted and indeed applied against the character of the immigrants.

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<sup>582</sup> 1880 Minnesota Federal Census, *Minneapolis Tribune*, 21 May 1870

<sup>583</sup> James M. Reardon, 'The Catholic Total Abstinence Movement in Minnesota' in *Acta Et Dicta*, The St Paul Catholic Historical Society, Vol. II, No. 1, July 1909, p.72

<sup>584</sup> *St Paul Daily Dispatch*, 22 April, 1874

<sup>585</sup> *St Paul Daily Dispatch*, 15 May 1875

<sup>586</sup> *St Paul Pioneer Press*, 27 June 1878, *St Paul Daily Globe*, 27 June 1878

<sup>587</sup> *Saint Paul Daily Globe*, 11 January 1879

<sup>588</sup> *New York Times*, 17 December 1882.

<sup>589</sup> *The Lowell Daily Courier*, 24 April, 1883, p. 8

<sup>590</sup> *Northwestern Chronicle*, 2 December 1886

In the first oral account as noted earlier, Ryan was described as unsympathic while in the second account John Ireland was identified as not being opposed to the provision of alcohol in Graceville. The oral accounts were recalled by individuals who did not hold Ryan or John Ireland in high regard. However, rather than focus on the opinions which can be disputed, historians or researchers should question why the narrative evolved in such a manner. What are the histories hidden beneath the language and how do researchers record these histories that are found in the margins? The following section will examine document-based evidence and the evidence provided by oral accounts.

### **Document Based History and Oral History**

Bridget Connelly is Professor Emeritus of Rhetoric at the University of California Berkeley and a scholar of folklore. Connelly is further a descendant of Nugent's immigrants. Lawrence, or as noted on the shipping list, Latorerie Flaherty, was Connelly's great-grandfather. In re-examining the story of Nugent's immigrants, Connelly in *Forgetting Ireland* considers new aspects which were not considered previously. This new information suggests Protestant prejudice existed among the people of Morris and further suggested John Ireland was less than honest in his dealings with railroad land grants. The application of document-based evidence along with the application of folklore tradition expanded the study of Nugent's immigrants in particular the family history of Lawrence O'Flaherty whom Nugent assisted to leave. While folklore studies do not adhere to the criteria of traditional document-based history, and do not lend easily to 'narration in the chronological-linear format which academic history is generally ordered', they frequently provide a more nuanced account of the past. According to Beiner, oral history studies distinguishes between oral history proper as defined as recollections of contemporary events and oral tradition referring to knowledge that was transmitted orally over several generations.<sup>591</sup> The term folklore is generally used to refer to the traditional beliefs, myths, tales, and practices of a people which have been disseminated in an informal manner and often recorded as oral histories. According to Ballard, 'the value of each source is unlocked by a sensible and sensitive appraisal of the material, and is dependent as much on the resource as it is upon the clearly thought out approach of the analyst'.<sup>592</sup> Connelly's work can be described as partly a

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<sup>591</sup> Guy Beiner, *Remembering the Year of the French Irish Folk History and Social Memory*, (The University of Wisconsin Press, 2007), pp. 11-12

<sup>592</sup> Linda May Ballard, 'Awk, but Maybe it's Only a Load of Aul' lies – An Opinion on Oral Tradition', in *Oral History*, Vol 14, No. 2, Museums and Oral History (Autumn, 1986), p. 42

historical account and partly a memoir. The various methodologies used to uncover the history of a people or localities are greatly enhanced by the use of local knowledge. Connelly's use of oral tradition expands the narrative of Nugent's immigrants. Unlike previous accounts, the folklore tradition provided a narrative from below, from those whose ancestors had direct dealings with the Colonization Bureau and John Ireland. A number of themes are considered by Connelly which relate to Nugent's immigrants; the first is the relationship between the new settlers and those who had arrived earlier, the second is the language the immigrants spoke. A third consideration is a new perspective introduced by Connelly who, as noted previously, maintains that a Protestant bias existed which worked against the newly-arrived Catholic immigrants. The new insights provided brought to light by oral tradition will be examined but before this is attempted, a closer look at the relationship between the colonists and John Ireland will be undertaken. In the decades that followed, the dispersal of land grants was examined by Congress which left those farming the land in question particularly vulnerable.

### **Oral-History Legacy of John Ireland**

The oral tradition concerning John Ireland's efforts in Graceville had some negative aspects. According to Connelly, oral tradition of some Graceville residents represented John Ireland as someone whose personal interests and ambitions were his primary motivation. His colonization efforts were described as 'pet projects', and Connelly maintained the people of Graceville felt they had been 'bamboozled by their own bishop'. Local tradition further maintained John Ireland's 'bookkeeping was sketchy' and that he sold colony lands to solve his personal financial problems. 'It was always hard to distinguish which property belonged to the archdiocese and which to the man himself ... no doubt about it, the bishop wheeled and dealed with the big-timers'.<sup>593</sup>

A dispute between Ireland and land holders erupted from the decision taken by the Secretary of the Interior in 1887 which revoked 21 million acres of railway lands and restored them to the federal government because of the railroads' failure to carry out their land grant

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<sup>593</sup> Bridget Connelly, *Forgetting Ireland* pp 111, 207-8, 211-212. There are many statements which highlight this point. 'The question of land titles was pointing the way to the railroad indemnity lands controversy and an enduring land scandal, which, in turn, raised questions about Bishop Ireland, our founding father: What did the Bishop have to benefit? Was it only money, the profit to be made from holding an option on land at a dollar an acre and selling it for at least four dollars? Was it greed, ambition, lust for power over people's lives?', p. 85; 'The tale of the Bishop's real estate speculation in Moonshine and its surrounding townships was a lesson in the cynicism that comes from failed ideals', p 207; Guy Beiner, *Remembering the Year of the French*, pp 23-24

requirements. In 1899 after considerable years of litigation the decision of the Commissioner of the General Land Office was supported by the Secretary of the Interior who found in favour of John Ireland and upheld the agreement John Ireland made with the railway companies in 1883.<sup>594</sup> After the decision Ireland disposed of the land by arrangement with the land holders. The land grants offered to Nugent's immigrants in 1880 were never in contention. At no time did the decision of 1887 affect the five families who remained in Graceville. However it is unclear if this decision to revoke land grants affected the descendants of Nugent's immigrants. Maps of land ownership of the 1930s indicated the original homesteads and showed additional land that had been acquired by the descendants of those who remained in Big Stone.<sup>595</sup> The threat of losing not only their land but their livelihoods left lasting scars on some of the people of Graceville.

As has been seen in this study, academic historiography is grounded in the concept of linear-chronological time. But social memory 'integrates various frameworks and rhythms of time'. According to Beiner an exploration in vernacular landscape offers an 'insight in-to the mental geographies that were vividly evoked in folklore accounts and illustrate the vital relationship between local communities and their surroundings'.<sup>596</sup> As a community, the people of Graceville and Big Stone suffered considerable anguish over a significant number of years due to the ambiguity of unsecured land deeds. The importance of land ownership cannot be underestimated as it provided security to those who were without cash or resources. All immigrants to western Minnesota, not just those who were assisted by Nugent, had left behind them a precarious existence and upon availing of Colonization lands they were confident in the expectation of a better life. When this trust was undermined it threatened the very security they had been promised. The 1798 rebellion in Ireland was remembered two hundred years later largely in terms of fields and locations where skirmishes took place and where rebels hid while attempting to escape.<sup>597</sup> The history of the lands of Graceville extended generations and this history included the acquisition of the land and the great journeys taken by families' who bravely invested in their own destinies. Although the fear of the loss of land affected the descendants of those who remained in Graceville and Big Stone it had no direct effect on the families who forfeited their land and left for the cities in 1880.

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<sup>594</sup> *The New York Times*, 22 January, 1899

<sup>595</sup> Bridget Connelly in *Forgetting Ireland*, states John Ireland was considered to be 'worse than Jesse James', a notorious outlaw, p.80. With regard to indemnity lands Connelly states the settlers east of Graceville 'believed the Bishop had defrauded them', p.194; *Atlas and Farmers' Directory of Big Stone County, Minnesota* (Webb Publishing Company, 1931)

<sup>596</sup> Guy Beiner, *Remembering the Year of the French*, pp 124, 209

<sup>597</sup> Beiner Guy, *Remembering the Year of the French Irish Folk History and Social Memory*, pp 126-7



According to Mulrooney Irish settlements in Ireland tied themselves to the land to the extent that such settlements were not merely collections of cottages and farm buildings but contained ties with blood relatives who were often neighbours. The original homesteaders of western Minnesota and their descendants, although mostly not related to one another, had a closeness of community that had been built up by mutual dependency similar to agricultural societies in Ireland and Europe. Further, the democratic nature of folk historiography is twofold in its numerous practitioners and in its content, which refers to numerous subjects, who are primarily 'common' people. However, although folk histories are democratic there are families whose traditions have an 'invested interest in the preservation and aggrandizement of the names of their ancestors'.<sup>598</sup> Myths too are often attached to people simply because some people are more mythogenic than others. It is easy to understand how the risk of loss of homesteads can be contrasted with a depiction of John Ireland as a class of speculator. This is explained by a 'perception of a "fit" in some respect or respects between a particular individual and a current stereotype of a hero or villain ... this "fit" strikes people's imagination and stories about that individual begin to circulate, orally in the first instance'.<sup>599</sup> Collective memory can further stereotype a nation's heroic deeds or propagate a collective myth.

Donnelly highlighted how the construction of famine memory from 1850 to 1890 emerged in a nationalist framework in Ireland and among the diaspora. He criticised the flawed depiction of the famine as state genocide. Memories of evictions and clearances among the diaspora strengthened support for nationalistic organisations and land agitation in the 1880s as the 'survivors of the clearances must often have spoken of their memories of dispossession ... In doing so they gave a particular shape to nationalistic memories of the great famine'. While great advances in knowledge and understanding of the Famine had taken place since the 1980s, the notion of state genocide, as explained by the level of food exports during the Famine, continued in Irish America. The moral outrage among nationalists focused on the injustice of famine and its consequences. It was not food exports that held memories but the suffering of a people at the hands of others who tolerated their suffering too

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<sup>598</sup> Beiner Guy, *Remembering the Year of the French Irish Folk History and Social Memory*, pp 141, 172-3; Margaret M. Mulrooney, *Black Powder, White Lace The Du Pont Irish and Cultural Identity in Nineteenth Century America*, (University Press of New England, 2003), p. 55

<sup>599</sup> Jeffrey K. Olick, Vered Vinitzky-Seroussi and Daniel Levy, (Ed.), *The Collective Memory Reader*, (Oxford University Press, N.Y., 2011) p. 190

readily.<sup>600</sup> The Irish diaspora too shared a number of features with the forced movement of other nations and developed a ‘widely-shared collective memory’ of the Famine.<sup>601</sup> According to Lee, it was virtually impossible for the Famine experience to be unknown within Irish enclaves even among those who came from families where the trauma led to deliberate silence on behalf of the survivors. Lee states memory operates in a variety of ways, and questions whether ‘is it really conceivable that they [Catholic Irish] never heard a solitary reference to it outside their homes’.<sup>602</sup> Interactions with Irish workers, and with individuals in Irish saloons and other Catholic and nationalistic environments would have made it impossible not to have been aware of the Famine suffering. The memory of the Famine in Irish America presented an oral tradition defined by distress; evictions by a landlord class viewed as a representation of English strength against a disempowered class are the memories that lingered. Regardless of the inaccuracies which surround the sentiment, it remains; the English starved the Irish during the Famine.

In Australia and New Zealand the memories of the Famine were more subdued because the environment was different. ‘It was British and there was pressure on the minority immigrant Irish to integrate with fellow colonists from different ethnic and religious backgrounds’. According to Geary, many Australians agreed with the integrationist argument of the Richmond-based Jesuit, Thomas Cahill, that the Famine was an act of God and ‘the English had responded to the crisis with nobility and generosity’. Cahill stated, ‘such kindness did much to extinguish the prejudices of some against England’.<sup>603</sup> However, although the collective memory of the Famine in Australia was different to the memories of those in America, the ‘cataclysm’ that was the Famine was ‘seared upon the collective memory of the expatriate Irish’ as was witnessed by the generosity of Australasia during the crisis of 1879-80.<sup>604</sup>

The families that remained in Graceville were associated with the events of the winter of 1880 and although they may have had no act in denouncing the Colonization Bureau or

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<sup>600</sup> Donnelly, James, S., ‘The Construction Of The Memory Of The Famine In Ireland And The Irish Diaspora’, 1850-1900, *Eire Ireland*, 1996 XXXI, 1-2, pp 26-29, 44-45, 60-61

<sup>601</sup> Enda Delaney, Kevin Kenny and Donald M. MacRaild, ‘Symposium: perspectives on the Irish diaspora’, *Irish Economic and Social History*, 33 (2006), p. 36

<sup>602</sup> J.J. Lee, Introduction: Interpreting Irish America, in *Making the Irish American: The History & Heritage of the Irish in the United States*, (ed.) J.J. Lee and Marion R. Casey, pp 19-20

<sup>603</sup> Geary, Laurence, ‘The Australasian Response to the Irish Crisis, 1879-80’, in Oliver MacDonagh and W.F. Mandle (eds.), *Irish-Australian Studies: Papers Delivered at the Fifth Irish-Australian Conference* (Canberra, 1989), p. 108

<sup>604</sup> Geary, Laurence M., ‘Charles Gavan Duffy, The Great Famine in Ireland, and Famine Memory in Colonial Australia’, *Australasian Journal of Irish Studies* 7 (2007/8), pp 62-63

Bishop Ireland the fact they were the only people left may have singled them out so that when the story was recalled they were forever associated with it. The negative publicity associated with the hardships of the winter of 1880-81 may not have been welcomed by other newly arrived colonists. The accounts of distrust of John Ireland were recalled by the descendants of families who suffered directly or indirectly in the severe winter of 1880 and although the security of later land deals may not have directly affected their families' original lands, the events of 1880 along with a threat of loss of land left a legacy of distrust among some Graceville and Big Stone residents.

### **Folklore and Legends – The Connemara Legacy**

Connelly was not the first researcher to consider the oral tradition and the legacy left by Nugent's immigrants. In 1957 James Shannon in his definitive and influential work on Catholic colonization included an oral account. According to Shannon, the colonists already settled in Graceville were instructed to take in and care for one family of Nugent's immigrants until the wood frame homes were completed which was not expected to take too long. Shannon states that the 'friction started ... [when] several of the earlier colonists objected to the dirty clothes, rough speech, and offensive manners of the newcomers'. Shannon further stated Nugent's immigrants were 'fighting like animals'.<sup>605</sup> This oral account of the immigrants' early beginnings was given to Shannon by Sister Grace Aurelia, C.S.J., of the Sisters of St. Joseph, St. Paul. In an earlier account from the 1930s, it had been stated that the 'improvidence of the Connemaras quickly roused the ire and indignation of the Graceville colony'.<sup>606</sup> In adding to the oral heritage, Connelly stated, Miss Mattie O'Neill, 'the milliner and proprietor of the newly opened Bazaar of Fashion', provided supper for one large family but was 'aghast to observe the man of the family gobble down every last one of the little tea sandwiches in front of him'.<sup>607</sup> The oral tradition indicated a divide existed between Nugent's immigrants and those who had settled in Graceville since the establishment of the colony two years earlier. The division seems to have emanated from those who had more in social capital and resources. The advantages of having lived in the U.S. for a considerable period of time left the newly arrived immigrants behind or looking as though they were backward people. The poverty of Nugent's immigrants had previously been noted by members of the Colonization Bureau. There can be no doubt the newly arrived

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<sup>605</sup> Shannon, J.P., *Catholic Colonization on the Western Frontier*, p.158

<sup>606</sup> Moynihan, J. H., *The Life of Archbishop John Ireland*, p. 26

<sup>607</sup> Connelly, *Forgetting Ireland*, p.6

immigrants looked different, were of a lower social class and may have reminded many Irish Catholics of the hardship faced by their own ancestors as newly arrived immigrants.

The distinction between groups of Irish people was not unusual. But difference was not solely considered as a religious and ethnic divide. A number of examples highlighted social, cultural and class differences. The topography of Pennsylvania's steel towns reflected the power structure that existed across America. The families of immigrant labourers lived down in the 'flats' on the riverbanks, and superintendents and the professional middle-class lived on top of the hills overlooking the towns with Irish foremen and skilled workers living somewhere in between.<sup>608</sup> The class separation was further complicated by subdivisions within classes. Kenny's study of Pennsylvanian miners indicated how various groups from different Irish counties congregated with others from the same county. Certain settlements were the 'enclaves of a transplanted regional identity with its own specific forms of language and culture'. Molly Maguire activism was concentrated in regions where a preponderance of Donegal men had relocated. Donegal and Mayo immigrants affiliated with one another along parish, local and regional lines 'rather than adhering to some abstract identity of Irishness'. Unskilled Irish miner gangs from the west of Ireland fought with skilled miners from Kilkenny who were derisively known as 'souters'. The Kilkenny miners were Protestant whose British ancestors had settled in Kilkenny prior to immigrating to America.<sup>609</sup>

Examples of loathing and marginalisation of men from the west of Ireland were to be found in England too. In Liverpool in the mid-nineteenth century, Connacht men were described as distinctive in appearance and as extremely small feeble men but sober and well behaved. The men from the west of Ireland worked as harvesters and were not employed on construction crews as they were routinely discriminated against by other Irishmen. One builder outlined how he was unable to hire a Connacht man as he was 'always spoken in terms of contempt by the others; he is discovered by them immediately, and they will persecute him till he quits. The other three provinces consider the Connaught men as a lower caste'.<sup>610</sup>

The executions of twenty men identified as Molly Maguires in the 1870s in Pennsylvania was accounted for in terms of tales of morality where heroic detectives captured and punished evil men bent on terrorising local communities by extreme violence. The reality which was not officially recognised for more than a century was that the

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<sup>608</sup> James R. Barrett, *The Irish Way Becoming American in the Multiethnic City*, (New York, 2013), p.122

<sup>609</sup> Kenny Kevin, *Making Sense of the Molly Maguires*, (Oxford University Press, New York, 1998), p. 26

<sup>610</sup> Belchem, John, Irish, *Catholic and Scouse, The History of the Liverpool-Irish, 1800-1939*, (Liverpool, 2007), p. 30

discrimination faced by the miners most of whom were poor, Irish, and Catholic resulted from labour disputes and collective violence. These miners were denied advancement through the social scale and locked out of unions because of their differences. They fought for justice at a local level but did not see their struggle as part of a national conflict. Most contemporaries applauded the executions and it was not until 1978 that the Governor of Pennsylvania declared the executions a dreadful miscarriage of justice.<sup>611</sup>

The discrimination against Irish immigrant miners in Pennsylvania prevented assimilation and led to a violent reaction. But not all forms of discrimination led to violence and were more often subtle. It was the desire for upward mobility that further distinguished Irish immigrants from one another. By the 1890s the term ‘lace curtain’ was applied to some Irish along with other less popular adjectives like ‘cut glass Irish’, ‘steam heat Irish’. These terms distinguished the upwardly mobile Irish from the more recently arrived or persistently poor ‘shanty Irish’. Although this identification was a bit premature for second-generation Irish males who were underrepresented among lawyers, brokers and bankers, it did however, represent second-generation Irish women who apparently did better than males. Most impressive was the number of American-born Irish women who became teachers.<sup>612</sup> According to Miller, it was by the early 1870s a smaller but significant Irish-American upper and upper-middle class had already emerged. It was this increasingly large petit bourgeoisie of ‘lace curtain’ Irish who strove to keep the ‘shanty’ Irish at arm’s length. The rising status of Irish-Americans as ‘honorary Anglo-Saxon’ was condescending at best as most middle-class Irish remained on the margins of American society. Within Protestant native society they often endured irritating prejudices from native employers and co-workers. WASP non-recognition of Irish-American accomplishments embittered the Irish middle class.<sup>613</sup> Nearly all post-famine immigrants were English-speaking and literate individuals who adapted to American society ‘through the medium of bourgeois-dominated and fervently patriotic associations’ such as the American Catholic Church, the Democratic Party and the Irish-American charitable and temperance associations.<sup>614</sup> By the late nineteenth century single

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<sup>611</sup> Kenny Kevin, *Making Sense of the Molly Maguires*, (Oxford University Press, New York, 1998), pp 284-86

<sup>612</sup> Meagher, *The Columbia Guide to Irish American History*, pp 103-4; James R. Barrett, *The Irish Way Becoming American in the Multiethnic City*, (New York, 2013), p.109

<sup>613</sup> Kerby A. Miller, ‘Assimilation and Alienation: Irish Emigrants’ Responses to Industrial America, 1871-1921’, in P.J. Drudy, ed. *The Irish in America: Emigration, Assimilation, Impact*, pp 89-91

<sup>614</sup> Kerby A. Miller with David N. Doyle and Patricia Kelleher, “For Love and Liberty”: Irish Women, Migration and Domesticity in Ireland and America, 1815-1920, in Patrick O’Sullivan, (ed.), *The Irish World Wide: History, Heritage, Identity, Volume 4* (London and Washington: Leicester University Press, 1995), p. 53

Irish women dominated household service in most American cities outside of the deep south with over 70 per cent of women in employment, employed as domestics. Domestic service in middle-class American households refined, and in some cases inspired, bourgeois aspirations both material and socio-cultural.<sup>615</sup> Although Irish women adopted native 'Protestant' traits, in some areas they retained traits associated with poorer Catholic Irish. The Dillingham Commission in 1910-12 showed that the more Americanised Irishwomen of Minnesota and Ohio continued to marry earlier and have larger families than their sisters and nieces in the eastern cities, often recently arrived. Women were the chief element making for cohesion within the diaspora.<sup>616</sup>

Mulrooney's study of the Du Pont Irish is an interesting account of the 'lace curtain' Irish, mostly Ulster Catholics who worked at the Du Pont Gunpowder factory and suggested the malleability of class identities and the significance of aspirations towards upward social mobility.<sup>617</sup> Mulrooney shows how the Irish avidly pursued social mobility where advancement was achieved by various programmes of direct assistance. These included good wages, interest bearing savings accounts, free or low cost housing, education for children and benefits for widows. The Du Pont Company's paternalism worked on many levels to initiate acculturation and stimulate upwards mobility which cemented the bond between employer and employee. Acculturation changed the conceptions of ethnic identity. In Ireland, individuals affiliated along local lines but the importance of shared national origins emerged only after migration abroad where definitions of 'Irishness' varied from place to place.<sup>618</sup>

The ideology of social mobility in nineteenth century America afforded the hope that anyone could purchase property if he worked hard. The Du Pont Irish welcomed the material benefits that an industrialised, market-orientated society offered. Along with parlour furnishings, 'yards and fences reinforced the mutualistic compact, and instilled a new understanding of "private" property rights'. Fences, according to Mulrooney came to represent the growing gap between the haves and have nots.<sup>619</sup> Along with fences, linen tablecloths and lace curtains symbolised respectability and upward mobility. By 1870 a

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<sup>615</sup> Kerby A. Miller with David N. Doyle and Patricia Kelleher, "For Love and Liberty": Irish Women, Migration and Domesticity in Ireland and America, 1815-1920, in Patrick O'Sullivan, (ed.), *The Irish World Wide: History, Heritage, Identity, Volume 4*, pp 54-55

<sup>616</sup> Doyle, David Noel, Cohesion and Diversity in the Irish Diaspora, *Irish Historical Studies*, Vol. 31, No. 123 (May, 1999), pp 419-420

<sup>617</sup> Enda Delaney, 'Migration and Diaspora' in (ed) Alvin Jackson, *The Oxford Handbook of Modern Irish History*, (Oxford, 2014), p.134

<sup>618</sup> Mulrooney, Margaret M., *Black Powder, White Lace The Du Pont Irish and Cultural Identity in Nineteenth-Century America*, (University Press of New England, 2003), pp 9, 11-15, 37, 77

<sup>619</sup> *Ibid*, pp 135, 152, 164, 182

sizeable proportion of every community did experience some form of upward mobility. Falling prices and rising incomes over the course of the nineteenth century provided many of the things that signified bourgeois identity. By improving manners, literacy and clothing, Du Pont's Irish 'effectively communicated their engagement with an ideology of social and individual betterment that pervaded nineteenth century America'.<sup>620</sup> According to Meagher, for no other group in America did the issues of mobility and status seem so important. One possibility suggested by Meagher is the 'distinctiveness of its colonialism' in Ireland. Irish peasants although poor could remember or at least thought that at one stage they had not been poor, and this distinguished them from many of the poor peasant immigrants from other countries.<sup>621</sup> Irish Catholics identified success in terms of group identity. The arrival of Nugent's immigrant in Graceville may have incensed other Irish immigrants who had travelled from the east coast in an attempt to define their own success. Graceville the 'Homestead Colony' was established as a Catholic enclave in western Minnesota where respectability was desired as seen by the prohibition of alcohol.

Social inequality among Irish groups occurred throughout the British colonies and in the United States. Ned Kelly, an Australian bushranger of Catholic Irish descent lived on the edge of the squatter's land in the Victorian ranges north of Melbourne. After his father died he became the primary provider for the family. When his sister and mother were unjustly treated by a police force built upon British policing models, the response from Kelly and his brother set off a series of incidents which ultimately led to his death by execution. Kelly's defiant stand against the Felons Apprehension Act and his pleas for justice to end discrimination against poor Irish settlers symbolised him as a folk hero who sought justice and liberty. One of the men responsible for ending Kelly's criminal activities was John Sadlier. As superintendent of police he was in charge at Glenrowan when Ned Kelly was captured. Sadlier had been born in Tipperary as has Ned Kelly's father. However unlike Kelly's father who had been transported to Van Diemen's Land; he immigrated to Victoria in 1852 where he joined the cadet corps which preceded the state police of Victoria.

The backgrounds of both men differed greatly in that Sadlier was provided with opportunities by being part of a system he benefitted from by being 'within'. Kelly was the opposite, an outsider who was victimised by a police force, he knew, to be corrupt and unjust. Kelly's appeal to Ireland's oppression in his infamous letter identified the police as Irish

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<sup>620</sup> Ibid, pp 186-8, 205

<sup>621</sup> Meagher, Timothy J., ' "The Fireman on the Stairs": communal loyalties' in the making of Irish America', in J.J. Lee and Marion Casey (eds), *Making the Irish American: The History and Heritage of the Irish in the United States* (New York, 2006), pp 620, 622

bailiffs and English landlords and felt there was ‘never such thing as justice in English laws’. Such comments perhaps evoked the memory of his father’s transportation to Australia for stealing two pigs. ‘Persecuted, indomitable Ireland was for Ned Kelly a symbol of his – and his own people’s – plight’. In Victoria the poorest including the Kelly family were discriminated against by fellow Irish, who, with the assistance of the police unfairly claimed land and stock that grazed upon it.<sup>622</sup> The Victorian police force did not replicate the organisation of the RIC but Irish police practices were influential. Irish policemen were particularly well represented in New South Wales, Queensland, Western Australia and most especially in Victoria. According to Malcolm some 45 per cent of recruits in 1865 had previously served in a police force, the vast majority in the RIC. By 1874 the Victorian police force may have been commanded by an English man but 82 per cent of the police had been born in Ireland. ‘The Kelly outbreak could well be interpreted as a clash between different groups of Irish, on opposite sides of English law’. It was not just in Victoria that governments relied upon the Irish to police the Irish, from Ireland to England to the Australian colonies to the United States, Irish men in their role as police were often despised by their fellow countrymen who saw them as traitors.<sup>623</sup>

The use of oral testimonies as primary narratives must be carefully constructed alongside empirical evidence even when the accounts contradict each other. The search for a workable model of diaspora continues. According to MacRaild, the most interesting aspect of the diaspora discussion ‘resides in the possibility of developing a dialogue between theory and method which acknowledges the power of conceptual order and of evidentiary research’. New cultural historians, ‘in stressing transnational ... wish to de-centre traditional narratives, creating a new language of shifting “diaspora spaces” in place of once hegemonic nation’ while elitist and imperialist assumptions are wiped out from the historian’s vernacular, ‘except as anthropological memories of a dead language and culture dating to when the nation was paramount’. This post-modernist shift is understandable in some cases and even required as emotions and ideas cannot be bound by national boundaries. However, migration

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<sup>622</sup> *Oamaru Mail*, Vol XVIII, Issue 12044, 25 September 1913, p.8; Sadlier, John, *Recollections of a Victorian Police Officer* (Repeat Middlesex, 1973); Kelly, Ned, *The Jerilderie Letter*, (Repeat Oxford, 2011), p.18; O’Farrell, *The Irish in Australia: 1788 to the present* (Cork, 1996), p. 138

<sup>623</sup> Malcolm, Elizabeth, ‘“What would people say if I became a policeman?”: the Irish policeman abroad’, in Oonagh Walsh (ed), *Ireland Abroad: Politics and Professions in the Nineteenth Century* (Dublin, 2003), pp 100-103



patterns and social and political formations associated with diasporas can only limit and not exclude the transnational transmission of cultures.<sup>624</sup>

The oral accounts recorded by Shannon and Connelly present an image of poor Irish immigrants who were viewed as similar to the Irish immigrants of the 1840s. Such representation stereotyped the Irish in later decades and was too easily applied as a singular view to all Irish immigrants and in particular immigrants from the west of Ireland. Further, the oral accounts stereotyped the women who greeted Nugent's immigrants and depicted the women as being more concerned with table manners and linens. But what is the evidentiary research that supports the oral testimonies? The stereotypes did exist. Upwardly mobile immigrants were most often depicted as women who desired greater opportunities for their children. According to Meagher there are a couple of interesting patterns in the Irish-American obsession with mobility and status. One is the distinction made in popular culture between Irish-American men and Irish-American women in their attitudes toward social mobility where women are 'almost always depicted as socially and economically ambitious'. Such depictions reflect 'a broader, longtime cultural stereotype that women are shallow, lightheaded, and easily bedazzled by the frivolous: parties, clothes and the like'.<sup>625</sup> As outlined by MacRaild, the most interesting aspect of diaspora discussion, 'resides in the possibility of developing a dialogue between theory and method which acknowledges the power of conceptual order *and* of evidentiary research'.<sup>626</sup>

The records of St. Joseph's in St. Paul indicated Sister Grace Aurelia was born Mary Green in 1867 and was the daughter of an original Graceville settler.<sup>627</sup> Sister Grace was also a friend of John Ireland. In 1918 John Ireland wrote to congratulate Sister Grace after she was appointed Superior of St. Michael's Hospital in Grand Forks. Ireland stated, 'may your reign be long and successful. Of course, I regret personally that I shall seldom have the pleasure of seeing you. It was always a pleasure to me when I visited St. Joseph's Hospital'.<sup>628</sup> John Ireland and Sister Grace are a part of a power displacement between the Catholic Church in

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<sup>624</sup> Donald M. MacRaild, ' "Diaspora" and Transnationalism: Theory and Evidence in Explanation of the Irish World-wide', Symposium: 'Perspectives of the Irish Diaspora', *Irish Economic and Social History*, 33 (2006), pp 53-57

<sup>625</sup> Meagher, Timothy J., ' "The Fireman on the Stairs": communal loyalties' in the making of Irish America', in J.J. Lee and Marion Casey (eds), *Making the Irish American: The History and Heritage of the Irish in the United States* (New York, 2006), p.623

<sup>626</sup> Ibid, p. 55

<sup>627</sup> Archive Department of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet, St. Paul Province.

<sup>628</sup> Shannon places Sister Grace at eleven years old in 1880 and states the Greens arrived in Graceville in 1880 in *Catholic Colonization on the Western Frontier*, but the Archives Department of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet, St. Paul, province indicate Sister Grace was thirteen years old at the time. Letter from John Ireland was found at Archives Department of St. Joseph.

America and the immigrants who depended upon them for community and cohesion. The Catholic Church was the pathway to community and assimilation even if that assimilation was not full assimilation but that of an Irish Catholic presence. How reliable was the testimony of a person pre-disposed in favour of one over another even when the bias was subconscious? Sister Grace's memory of Nugent's immigrants was applied by Shannon to indicate laziness and poverty which in turn implied the immigrants were beggars. Such a label afforded derision not sympathy. In turn, Sister Grace's (Mary Green's) memory was applied by later researchers to imply 'lace curtain' pretensions on behalf of the settler women of Graceville. But this categorization of the women of Graceville may be an oversimplification.

Bridget Connelly in defence of the immigrants describes Greene as part of a 'lace curtain contingent' and draws upon a further statement by an interviewee, Mary Crowe, who acknowledged she had read Sister Grace's (Mary Green) oral account of Nugent's immigrants in Shannon's publication of the 1950s. Mary Crowe stated Mr. Greene was a first cousin of Bishop Feehan of Chicago.<sup>629</sup> The implication suggests the Green family are well connected and further divided those who had and those who had not. The use of oral accounts to record histories, according to MacRaid, is a cultural turn in diaspora studies, that 'raises the level of analysis from the empirical to the abstract and intensifies the problems of developing a research agenda that will be recognised as producing "real" histories'.<sup>630</sup> With regard to the original story of poor social etiquette on behalf of Nugent's immigrants, it must be noted that the Greene family along with other pioneers had settled in Graceville only a year prior to the arrival of Nugent's immigrants. The term 'lace curtain' was generally applied after 1880 and to those who not only had aspirations but those who had also achieved some material comfort in life. Had the pioneer settlement of Graceville achieved so much in its short existence to have allowed for such an improved social status?

This researcher spoke with descendants of the Green family in 2003 who expressed their disappointment at how their ancestors had been depicted by Shannon and Connelly. Abbie and Philip McDonald resided in Hollywood Township in Watertown in Minnesota. Abbie was born in 1945 and was named Abigail Ann Siefert. Maurice and Margaret Green were the great-grandparents of Abbie McDonald. Margaret Green was born in Ireland and immigrated to the United States in 1865 when she was 25 years of age. The following year

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<sup>629</sup> Connelly Bridget, *Forgetting Ireland*, p. 53

<sup>630</sup> Donald M. MacRaid, ' "Diaspora" and Transnationalism: Theory and Evidence in Explanation of the Irish World-wide', Symposium: 'Perspectives of the Irish Diaspora', *Irish Economic and Social History*, 33 (2006), p. 53

she gave birth to her eldest son Thomas in New Jersey. Her daughter Mary was born in 1867 in Nova Scotia and her youngest three sons were born in Massachusetts. The details of the births of Margaret's children reveal the number of locations where the Green family had lived prior to travelling west to Minnesota. Margaret's youngest son William was born in 1874 and arrived in Graceville when he was five years of age. William Green's daughter, Mary Elizabeth was born in 1903, she married Roy Siefert. Mary and Roy's daughter, Abigail Ann Siefert married Philip McDonald.<sup>631</sup> The Green family oral history is one of pioneers and sod homes. An elderly relative of the McDonalds took the time to describe a sod home and drew a picture of the type of home her ancestors had built when they first arrived on the prairie. It would seem the Green family history conflicts with the oral accounts provided by Bridget Connelly. But can evidentiary research provide more details to give a clearer picture?

Census details of Graceville in 1880 do provide a more thorough depiction of the town and village of Graceville and its residents. The majority of Graceville residents were identified as farmers. The birth location or heritage of the 58 farmers were as follows; three farmers were German, one was Norwegian, two were Swedish, three were English, three were from Scotland and three were native born. Ten farmers were Prussian but the majority or 33 farmers came from Ireland and one of these was the Green family. All female spouses were described as 'keeping house' which indicated they too worked on the family farm. Young adults worked as labourers or domestics and young children were recorded as being at home. Fourteen females indicated they worked as domestics and seven young male adults were farm labourers of Irish heritage. One young Irish male worked in the hotel and one worked in the flour mills. The trade and professional classes included one hotel keeper, two general merchants, one hardware merchant, two blacksmiths, one shoemaker, one wagon maker, all of which were Irish. A second shoemaker had come originally from France. A large number of single men worked for the railway company. The number of railroad labourers included 22 Swedish, 14 Norwegians and four males from Denmark. Three men were railroad teamsters, two were Irish and one was English. The railroad clerk was born in New York of Irish and German parents and the conductor was Swedish.

Although residents may have been dismayed by the arrival of Nugent's immigrants it would seem somewhat improbable, particularly when Graceville had been established a little

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<sup>631</sup> Abbie and Flip McDonald provided information with regard to family history; dates were confirmed by the use of online electronic database search. 1880 Minnesota Federal Census; 1900 Census Graceville, Big Stone, Minnesota; Roll: 757; Page: 11A; Enumeration District: 0024; FHL Microfilm: 1240757, Ancestry.com

over a year prior to the arrival of Nugent's immigrants, that social pretensions existed in Graceville. It must be remembered that for the most part, Irish-American social pretensions as described previously, emerged after the 1880s in those areas where the Irish had acquired assets and status. All the immigrant families who were farmers in Graceville had been provided with farms of equal size with land of similar quality. Unlike land in Ireland, the Minnesota prairie land was not of mixed quality. Furthermore, as was evident in an earlier chapter on the Irish in America, the further west immigrants travelled, the more successful they were. Acceptance included diversity, where in the west, as in Eastern Australia, the Irish along with other immigrants were the pioneers who did not threaten an established structured society. The majority of Graceville residents were immigrants; only three farmers were native born.

## Irish Language

The use of the Irish language by some of Nugent's immigrants was noted in the oral histories which added to the written records that existed previously. In order to assess any disadvantage, a more comprehensive examination of the Irish language is required at its source in the west of Ireland and in America. The oral accounts were confirmed by the testimonies of the Graceville committee recorded in newspapers in 1880 where a small number of families indicated they spoke Irish.<sup>632</sup> Moreover, mass was said in Irish for the emigrants as they departed Galway which has led scholars to conclude those emigrating spoke Irish.<sup>633</sup> But, it was the usual tradition to recite sermons in English and in Irish. An American correspondent visiting Claremorris in 1880 stated the priests he dined with spoke many languages including French, German, Latin, Gaelic and English and that it was common in the west of Ireland for the priest to deliver a sermon both in English and Irish. 'There are still old folks in the mountains and on the isles who can talk no language but Gaelic. Even the old people who do talk English like to hear the Gospel preached to them in the ancient tongue of their forefathers'.<sup>634</sup>

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<sup>632</sup> *The Saint Paul Globe*, 21 December 1880, *The Saint Paul and Minneapolis Pioneer Press*, 21 December 1880. In the dispute which followed the distress of the Connemaras in Graceville, Dillon O'Brien rejected statements claimed to have been made by one immigrant family.

<sup>633</sup> *The Nation*, 19 June, 1880, p.6; B. Connelly, *Forgetting Ireland*, p. 133; A. Regan, 'The Irish', *They Choose Minnesota*, p.138; *Irish in Minnesota*, p.23; M. R. O'Connell, *John Ireland and the American Catholic Church*, p.150. The publications state most if not all of Nugent's immigrants were monoglot Irish-speakers. Connelly and Regan present the use of the language as a disadvantage to the immigrants.

<sup>634</sup> *The Connaught Telegraph*, 29 May, 1880.

Across the Mid-West and West, towns, cities and even states were established in the late nineteenth century. In the period of mass immigration from Europe and Asia, the newly established communities were filled with immigrants whose vernacular was a barrier to immediate assimilation.<sup>635</sup> United States immigrants were affected by the stereotypes and prejudices associated with those who used 'a low-status minority language' such as Gaelic. Many turned away from their own cultures and language in order to assimilate.<sup>636</sup> Gaelic was considered a liability. According to Houston and Smyth the Irish abroad adopted English as the means of advancement.<sup>637</sup> Norwegians and Germans who conformed to English in order to advance often did so by adopting the negative stereotype of the majority to their own culture and language. The prejudice of the White Anglo Saxon majority towards the Irish language and culture saw the Irish follow this similar path to conformity and Americanism.<sup>638</sup>

The 1900 and 1910 Minnesota censuses provided information with regard to the language Nugent's immigrants spoke.<sup>639</sup> However, analysing information with regard to the language the immigrants spoke twenty years after their arrival cannot accurately provide details as to the language they spoke upon their arrival, as by this time, two decades after their arrival, necessity alone meant all would have spoken the colloquial vernacular which was English. In an attempt to uncover how much of the Irish language some of Nugent's emigrants spoke or understood it was necessary to isolate a region from where a family originated. John Gallagher, his wife Annie Lavelle and their children were one of the five families that remained in Graceville after 1880. The Gallaghers originated in 'Doolough', according to the *Graceville Enterprise*.<sup>640</sup> The nearest centre of trade for the Doolough Valley region was Louisburgh or Westport. According to Fitzgerald's analysis 8 per cent of the population spoke Irish in 1861 and in an ever declining environment it must be assumed that even less of the population spoke Irish by 1880. In the barony of Murrisk 41 per cent

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<sup>635</sup> Connolly, pp 58, 74. Marvin R. O'Connell in *John Ireland and the American Catholic Church* further states the immigrants spoke Gaelic but does not provide research to back this assertion, p.150. Regan Ann also states the immigrants spoke Irish in 'The Irish' in *They Choose Minnesota*, (MHS, St Paul, 1981), p.138. See appendix for comparative analysis of ethnicities residing in Big Stone County in 1880s.

<sup>636</sup> K. P. Corrigan, 'I gcuntas Dé múin Béarla do na leanbháin': eisimirce agus an Ghaeilge so naou aois déag' in O'Sullivan P. (ed.) *The Irish World Wide: History, Heritage, Identity Vol. 2 The Irish in the New Communities*. (London, 1992), p.143

<sup>637</sup> C.J. Houston and W.J. Smyth, 'The Irish Diaspora: Emigration to the New World, 1720-1920', in B.J. Graham and L.J. Proudfoot (eds), *An historical geography of Ireland* (London, 1993), p.362

<sup>638</sup> K. P. Corrigan, 'I gcuntas Dé múin Béarla do na leanbháin': eisimirce agus an Ghaeilge so naou aois déag' in O'Sullivan P. (ed.) *The Irish World Wide: History, Heritage, Identity Vol. 2 The Irish in the New Communities*. (London, 1992), pp 154-155

<sup>639</sup> See appendix for census records.

<sup>640</sup> *Graceville Enterprise* 26 March, 1909.

spoke Irish by 1871; once more this figure had declined further by 1880.<sup>641</sup> In the study of genealogy it is often the case that census information is not always exact particularly with information given or collected over generations. However, correlating locations with family names and dates it can still be used as a guide to identify people. Census household schedules for Ireland only exist for 1901 and 1911 with limited entries for 1821. It is impossible to identify the Gallagher family by cross referencing names and ages as they had left Ireland by this stage. A closer examination of the region will provide greater insight to the language they spoke as this can then be compared with individuals of similar ages who remained in the region in 1901.

Land and farms in post-Famine Ireland were passed from one generation to another intact and in many cases they were no longer sub-divided. Griffith's Valuation of land was completed by the 1860s. The survey valued individual property separately but more importantly for this purpose it provided the name of the individual that rented the land. Focus was given to the barony of Murrisk where the Doolough Valley is located. It should be noted that no townland called 'Doolough' as described in the *Graceville Enterprise* exists or did exist in the nineteenth century. The parishes of Murrisk are Aghagower, Kilgeever and Oughaval. It would appear that for this particular study it is extremely fortunate that Annie Lavelle recorded her maiden name on the shipping list and also provided it to census takers in Minnesota in the 1880s. It is these records along with Griffith's Valuation and the required time and patience which have resulted in finding the Gallagher/Lavelle family who were assisted to emigrate from Mayo in 1880.<sup>642</sup>

The marriage records indicated John Gallagher and Annie Lavelle were married on 9 April 1861 in the parish of Oughaval.<sup>643</sup> The names of their six children on the shipping list included Edward, Michael, Mary Ann, John, Anthony and Patrick.<sup>644</sup> The birth record of Michael with the location of birth as Lettereragh is further information which highlights where the family came from initially. It would seem that Annie Lavelle met and married John

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<sup>641</sup>Fitzgerald, Garrett, 'Estimates for Baronies Of Minimum Level Of Irish Speaking Amongst Successive Decennial Cohorts: 1771-1781' in *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy*, (1984), p.118; 'Irish-Speaking in the Pre-Famine Period: A Study Based on the 1911 Census Data for People born before 1851 and still alive in 1911', *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy. Section C: Archaeology, Celtic Studies, History, Linguistics, Literature*, Vol. 103C, No. 5, (2003).

<sup>642</sup> See appendix for Griffith's Valuation records.

<sup>643</sup> <http://www.mayoancestors.com/default.aspx?SID=326170>

<sup>644</sup> <http://www.mayoancestors.com/default.aspx?SID=326181&Type=BI>. Information corresponding to all the Gallagher children does not recognise Edward as a sibling. Michael Gallagher's birth record indicates he was born on the first of April 1864 in Lettereragh, Mary Anne was born on 19 August 1868 in Kilgeever, John was born on 24 March 1871 in Dooleague, Anthony was born on 3 July 1873 in Doon and Patrick was born on 29 March 1876 also in Doon, County Mayo.

Gallagher and together they remained at her family home and began their family at this location, a practice often seen in mid-nineteenth century Ireland. The Gallagher/Lavelle family resided in many locations as can be seen by the recorded births. The locations included; Kilgeever, Dooleague and Doon. Any number of events could have led the family to continually relocate. The pull factors may have included employment opportunities while push factors could have included social reasons such as local disagreements or lack of opportunities. The Gallagher/Lavelle family did not move great distances at any time.

The 1901 census of Ireland indicated that not one person of any age in the townlands highlighted in the parish of Kilgeever spoke Irish without the knowledge of English. John Gallagher and Annie Lavelle were less than 70 years of age by 1900. In 1900, based on ages taken from shipping list of the *Austrian*, John Gallagher was 65 years of age while his wife was 60 years old. From the same census information it can be seen that a retired shepherd from Letteeragh born nearly 30 years before John and Annie could speak English. Another individual, J. Davitt from Srahrooskey was born in 1801, almost forty years prior to Gallagher and Lavelle births spoke English. The one consistent factor which appears across south Mayo is the fact that every individual over the age of seventy could speak English. A similar effort to obtain a clearer picture has been undertaken with regard to the district of Carna. The 1901 census is a more reliable source for age identification as by 1911 the Old Age Pensions Act had been introduced which in some cases incentivised people to age more rapidly.<sup>645</sup>

A number of the immigrants were chosen from the districts of Carna and Carraroe. Unlike the 1901 language review of south Mayo, the Connemara district of south Galway is located within the Galway Gaeltacht which is the largest and most populated Gaeltacht in Ireland. The expected outcome of few monoglot Irish-speakers was realised in south Mayo. However, any review of the 1901 census for Carna is expected to produce more monoglot Irish speakers as Browne identified the region as an Irish-speaking district. Furthermore, concrete examples are available which provide evidence that the Irish language was the colloquial vernacular of Carna. In 1873 a court case involving men from the Ceantar na nOileán district of Connemara indicated many could not speak English.<sup>646</sup> In 1881 a priest from Clifden wrote to Vere Foster to outline the wellbeing of women assisted by Forster, ‘very many of the Carna girls want of success is attributable to their ignorance of the English

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<sup>645</sup> O’Gráda, C. ‘The Greatest Blessing of All’: The Old Age Pension in Ireland, in *Past and Present*, (2002), p.126; See appendix for examples of persons over 70 years of age who resided in south Mayo in 1901.

<sup>646</sup> John Cunningham, ‘Recovering The Cargo Of The Julia - Salvage, and the killing of ‘wreckers’ in Conamara in 1873’, William Sheehan and Maura Cronin (Eds.) *Riotous Assemblies*, (Cork, 2011), pp 144-45

language'.<sup>647</sup> Michael Davitt recorded the events of an eviction which took place in Carraroe in January 1880 and stated very few men could speak English while 'that tongue was unknown to the women'.<sup>648</sup> Ten families were chosen by Nugent to emigrate from Carraroe. The electoral divisions of the district of Carna include Knockboy, Owengowla, Skannive, Moyrus and Illion. The County Galway Local Poverty Profile of 2005 examined the number of people aged three years and over who spoke Irish daily. It was found that 81.4 per cent of the residents of Knockboy spoke Irish. In Owengowla this figure was 72.5 per cent while in Skannive 92.2 per cent of the people spoke Irish.<sup>649</sup>

In total, of the 1039 homes in the Carna district, 254 homes of the 1901 census were reviewed. The largest population centres of each electoral district of Carna were considered of which 22 per cent of the population were aged seventy years and older. Of the 59 homes examined in Letterard in the Knockboy electoral district, 14 residents were 70 years and older. The majority of persons over 70 were monoglot Irish-speakers with only three of the fifteen persons indicating they were bi-lingual. Of the 49 homes in Kylesalia in the Owengowla electoral district, 12 residents were 70 years and older and seven of the residents were monoglot Irish-speakers. Of the 97 homes in Kilkieran in the Skannive electoral district, 25 residents were aged seventy and older with 14 being monoglot Irish-speakers. In Lehanagh South, in the Moyrus electoral district, 31 homes were examined, only four residents were seventy years and older with only one monoglot Irish-speaker. Lastly of the 18 homes in Shana Keela in Illion only one resident was seventy years of age. This resident was not a monoglot Irish-speaker.<sup>650</sup> In conclusion, of the 57 persons examined, 34 or 60 per cent were monoglot Irish-speakers. The decline of the Irish language is evident and what this examination suggests is that the communities of Carna were not solely monoglot Irish speaking communities as all communities has access to people who could speak English. As such, it cannot be stated categorically that all residents of Carna were monoglot Irish-speakers. However, it must be acknowledged no measurement exists as to how well or how poorly the English language was spoken. Although the people of Carna did have access to members of the community who spoke English, it was in all probability spoken poorly. Although some families spoke Irish most had access to English. The evidence has shown that

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<sup>647</sup> C.R. Browne, 'The Ethnography of Carna and Mweenish, in the parish of Moyrus, Connemara', *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy*, XXVII (1900), p.516; A letter from Father Patrick Frealy to Vere Foster, 26 September, 1881, Public Record Office of Northern Ireland, reference: D3618/D/15/35

<sup>648</sup> Davitt, M. *The Fall of Feudalism in Ireland*, (London, 1904), p.216

<sup>649</sup> <http://www.socialinclusion.ie/documents/GalwayCoCoInside.pdf>

<sup>650</sup> <http://www.census.nationalarchives.ie/search>. See appendix for Irish language analysis for Galway.



people from south Mayo spoke English and that few monoglot Irish-speakers remained in Mayo in the nineteenth century. The language spoken by those who resided in the more remote districts of Galway such as Carraroe and Carna was for the most part Irish but the communities had access to people who spoke English. The decline of the Irish language throughout Connemara was evident in the nineteenth century. As such it cannot be stated categorically that all residents of Carna and Carraroe were monoglot Irish-speakers. For the purposes of understanding Nugent's immigrants, the Irish language cannot indicate a disadvantage which was unique to these families.

### **Anti-Catholic Bias**

A newer hypothesis regarding the immigrants was considered by Connelly who maintained a protestant bias existed. This is by far the most controversial new suggestion which has been added to the story of Nugent's immigrants. According to Connelly members of the Morris community were Masons who were opposed to Catholic settlement.<sup>651</sup> Connelly automatically assumed the Morris people who she states were Masons were anti-Catholic. By basing an assumption on one piece of information, which was identifying that Morris individuals who provided charity for Nugent's immigrants were Masons, may require more substantive evidence. The presence of a Masonic Lodge cannot by itself indicate a Catholic bias or prejudice as not all Masons were anti-Catholic. During the food crisis of 1880, Sydney's Catholic Archbishop, Roger Vaughan, appealed for funding at the Masonic hall to support those suffering from famine in Ireland. His pleas were met by generosity and enthusiasm.<sup>652</sup> Further the Katikati settlement in New Zealand is an example where the needs of the colony and those who lived there were prioritised over cultural and religious prejudice. Katikati was established solely with the intension of establishing a tight-knit Ulster Protestant settlement in the 1870s. But a major depression saw half of the original settlers leave and be replaced by Catholic settlers. Despite the distinctions between Presbyterians and followers of the Church of Ireland and Irish Catholics there was little evidence of strong religious discrimination in the settlement. According to Jasmine Rogers, Orange culture in Katikati had fallen away in less than twenty years. Although Katikati was a settlement of Ulster men

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<sup>651</sup> Connelly, B., *Forgetting Ireland*, p.107; Connelly states, 'Bishop Ireland's acquisition of huge tracts of railroad lands in western Minnesota appears to have set off fears that aligned old Yankee settlers and German Protestant immigrations against the newly arrived Irish Catholics', p. 120

<sup>652</sup> Geary, Laurence, 'The Australasian Response to the Irish Crisis, 1879-80', in Oliver MacDonagh and W.F. Mandle (eds.), *Irish-Australian Studies: Papers Delivered at the Fifth Irish-Australian Conference* (Canberra, 1989), pp 110-111

and women it was not strictly an Ulster settlement. Settlers in Katikati did not replicate an Ulster community but one which was more suited their needs in the New World.<sup>653</sup>

The claim of anti-Catholic prejudice does not exist in any publication prior to *Forgetting Ireland*. No newspaper accounts of Nugent's immigrants outline this claim nor have previous researchers of John Ireland and Catholic colonisation made this assertion. Ann Regan in 1981 stated John Ireland campaigned for the Republican Party and was a friend of Republican Governor, Cushman K. Davis and James G. Blaine who was twice Secretary of State and Presidential candidate. He was further friends with U.S. Republican Presidents William McKinley and Theodore Roosevelt.<sup>654</sup> The Republican Party was associated with many nativists' groups in nineteenth century America. Regan does not mention the Morris people or the fact that some of the residents were Protestant in *The Irish* in 1981. In 2002 and in acknowledging Connelly's work, Regan states 'the colony's Protestant neighbours charged that the church was not supporting the "Connemaras"', as such introducing an emotional element which was the nineteenth century Protestant WASP – Catholic Irish divide. Further in 2014 Connelly maintained, 'competing claims for the land pitted Freemasons, Protestants, Germans, and Yankees against Irish Catholics'.<sup>655</sup> The animosity of Protestants towards Catholics was real in nineteenth century America but Regan's use of Connelly's hypothesis creates a more solid belief that anti-Catholic prejudice existed in Minnesota.<sup>656</sup>

As previously stated, Catholic discrimination in the United States was pervasive in the latter half of the nineteenth century but the evidence as to whether or not this same discrimination extended to the Minnesota prairie is ambiguous. Father Timothy Ryan claimed the reports of people suffering 'were circulated for the purpose of preventing the Irish from crowding into western Minnesota'. In a letter, Ryan challenged any disinterested party to prove Nugent's immigrants were suffering. Ryan's challenge to any 'disinterested' party suggests that at least it was his opinion that there were those who sought to misrepresent the efforts of the colonization company.<sup>657</sup> Furthermore, alarms of the nativist population may have been rung when the *New York Times* in October 1880 quoted Nugent who promised an increased immigration flow to America and outlined the Belgian colonies of Catholic

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<sup>653</sup> Patterson, Brad, ' "Be you an Orangeman, you shall meet Orangemen": New Zealand's Ulster Plantation Revisited', in Laurence M. Geary and Andrew J. McCarthy (eds.), *Ireland, Australian and New Zealand* (Dublin, 2008), pp 46-48, 55

<sup>654</sup> Regan Ann, 'The Irish' in *They Choose Minnesota*, (MHS, St Paul, 1981), p. 138

<sup>655</sup> Connelly, B., *Legends of the Graceville Connemaras in Irish Migrants in New Communities* edited by Micheál Ó hAodha and Máirtín Ó Catháin, (Lexington Books, 2014), p. 17

<sup>656</sup> Regan Ann, *Irish in Minnesota*, p. 23

<sup>657</sup> *The New York Times*, 21 December, 1880

agriculturalists who were heading to Minnesota. He further stated there were ‘signs everywhere throughout Europe that the tide of immigration will continue to increase instead of diminish’.<sup>658</sup> Nugent was not known for anything other than Catholic immigration and as such this tide of immigration he alluded to could only have been Catholic immigration. Added to this is the fact that from the mid 1870s hundreds of Irish immigrant families had relocated to Minnesotan colonies. However, these facts are not presented by Connelly or Regan and as can be seen from this study a very real bias did exist throughout the U.S. against Irish Catholics but it cannot be assumed that this bias existed in every enclave.

Campbell in comparing Minnesota to New South Wales indicated the advantage the Irish had by early settlement with strong communal ties. Minnesota’s early Irish settlers were to be found in the southeast of the state. By 1870, 70.5 per cent of Minnesota’s Irish-born population lived in 20 counties of the southeast. ‘Moreover, numerically strong and confident in their new environment, the Minnesota Irish seem to have been subjected to less sectarian or national conflict than their compatriots further east’.<sup>659</sup> According to Meagher the best example of community building did not happen in the Eastern cities but in the Mid-West in the city of St Paul where a relatively small number of Irish made St Paul an ‘Irishtown’ by working with competing ethnic groups. ‘The Irish in St Paul played the same game of selective exclusion and inclusion, pushing Scandinavian Republicans to the margin, cultivating Germans, and making deals between capital and labour’.<sup>660</sup> North of St Paul, German Catholics dominated St Cloud in Stearns county from the onset of settlement. They integrated into every aspect of the county’s development in what Conzen described as the process of localization of an immigrant culture where local institutions ‘shaped by the habits and worldviews of a locally dominant ethnic group in turn reshaped in their own image the habits and worldviews of the broader community’.<sup>661</sup> New settlements across the Mid-West and West allowed different ethnic groups to dominate unlike the east coast. For the conditions of the east coast to have existed in the Mid-West, the Mid-West was required to replicate the East Coast, however; it was an alternative that was sought by immigrants who migrated west. And yet, there were difficulties between different ethnic groups. Metress

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<sup>658</sup> *The New York Times*, 9 October, 1880

<sup>659</sup> Campbell Malcolm, *Ireland’s New World’s Immigrants, Politics, and Society in the United States and Australia, 1815-1922*, (University of Wisconsin Press, 2008), pp 65, 67, 71

<sup>660</sup> Meagher, Timothy J., ‘“The Fireman on the Stairs”: communal loyalties’ in the making of Irish America’, in J.J. Lee and Marion Casey (eds), *Making the Irish American: The History and Heritage of the Irish in the United States* (New York, 2006), p.638; From Mary Wingerd, *Claiming the City: Politics, Faith and the Power of Place in St. Paul* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2001)

<sup>661</sup> Kathleen Neils Conzen, *Mainstreams and Side Channels: The Localization of Immigrant Cultures*, *Journal of American Ethnic History*, Vol. 11, No. 1 (Fall, 1991), p. 10

states the Irish in the Mid-West did have conflicts; however these were not with nativists but with German Catholics and later with Polish Catholics who wished to remove Irish influence from the Catholic Church in America.<sup>662</sup> Moreover, had Protestant prejudices existed it would have been incumbent on the historians, in particular the historians of the Catholic Church, to highlight such disadvantage. No such research has been presented. However, future students of Irish-Minnesotan history will perhaps contend that such a bias did exist with steadfast researchers such as Regan and Connelly to back up this assertion. Indeed this has been the case; a radio programme on the Irish national broadcast, Raidió Telefís na hÉireann, RTÉ, when recalling John Ireland and the Graceville colony, historian Myles Dungan, stated Protestant prejudice existed. ‘The Connemaras ... had no awareness of the antagonism that existed between the overwhelmingly Protestant Masons and the American Catholic Church’.<sup>663</sup> Lastly, it would seem somewhat at odds with the methodology used by Connelly that she failed to indicate the response of the local people of Morris, Graceville or Big Stone with regard to whether or not a Protestant bias actually existed. It could only be assumed that such a fundamental question was asked of those with whom Connelly spoke with. Perhaps it is the silence that speaks.

Although it has been stated that Connelly’s work is the first publication to assert a Protestant bias existed, she was not the first to make this claim. In 1996, an Irish language documentary *Graceville* was aired in Ireland. The documentary was researched and narrated by Seosamh Ó Cuaig, a broadcaster with the Irish language radio station, RTÉ, Raidió na Gaeltachta, who produced a show about Connelly’s ancestors, the Flahertys. The documentary of 1996 introduced a number of new claims; one was that Nugent’s immigrants relocated to land that had displaced native Indians.<sup>664</sup> A more nuanced approach to this particular claim was required as the Sioux uprising of the 1860s was far removed from Catholic colonization of 1880. A number of residents from Graceville were interviewed for the documentary. One individual, Mary Crowe, confirmed Sister’s Grace’s assertion and added to claims of pretentiousness as discussed previously. Other statements in the documentary included the presence of a Masonic Lodge in Morris. Both Ó Cuaig and Connelly imply Protestant bias was an impediment to poor Catholic immigrants such as Nugent’s immigrants but does the evidence support this claim?

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<sup>662</sup> Metress Seamus, *The Great Lakes Region And The American Irish*, p. 23

<sup>663</sup> 11 September 2015, Myles Dungan, ‘On This Day’, a programme which is a part of a news programme, ‘Drivetime’, <http://mylesdungan.com/2015/09/11/on-this-day-11-9-1838-birth-of-archbishop-john-ireland/>

<sup>664</sup> <http://conamara.org/index.php?page=graceville>

The Federal Census of 1880 provided information of 163 households in Morris.<sup>665</sup> Overall, the character or ethnic breakdown showed that there were many cultures including those of Canadian, Irish, Swedish, Norwegian, German, Scottish and English heritage. In lesser numbers were those from Denmark, Poland, Prussia and Hanover. The majority of farmers came originally from the East Coast with Pennsylvania, Massachusetts and New York featuring prominently. The population of Morris was not one large dominant group as was seen in St Cloud where Germans were more visible or New Elm where Belgians were more prominent. The largest group of 77 families were identified as native but of this number the ethnic origin was unclear. Where ethnicity was evident, 22 homes indicated they had a husband or wife of Irish ancestry, 13 indicated Swedish heritage, 12 were of Canadian heritage, 10 of Norwegian and 9 were of English descent.

In examining the occupations of the people of Morris, 34 were native farmers who had migrated to Morris which was established in 1871. Some had only recently arrived in Morris. Robert Whitsen was 27 and had relocated to Morris with his wife in 1878. Another farmer, Dewitt C. Smith's first son had been born in California in 1878 but his youngest son had been born in Minnesota a year later. Farmers whose ethnicity was identified included seven Irish, and six from Germany. Professional and commercial interests indicated a cultural mix: four merchants were native born and three were from Sweden and one was from Norway. The railway foreman was Irish as was the physician's wife. The four lawyers who resided in Morris were native born as were the three hotel keepers but the owner of the eating saloon was of English and Scottish heritage and the owner of the town's only saloon was Norwegian. Morris's only banker, barber and druggist were native born but this was balanced by the town's only mason who was Irish, the two shoemakers who were Swedish and Irish and the only wagonmaker who was Swedish. Carpenters and blacksmiths came from the major groupings. A number of people kept boarders. One Norwegian who employed Norwegian servants kept Canadian boarders. An Irish man, Patrick Riley, kept 21 boarders from England, Denmark, Poland, Canada, France and Baden. He also housed three men from Ireland and five English people of Irish parents. The railway foreman, as noted earlier, kept lodgers too; three were Swedish, three were born in Ireland and five had Irish parents. One young farmer, George Gittinan, employed three Irish labourers, Michael Kavanagh, Michael Gherty and Joseph White. The examples are important as they indicate a cultural interaction,

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<sup>665</sup> 1880 United States Federal Census, Ancestry.com and The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Census Place: Morris, Stevens, Minnesota; Roll: 635; Family History Film: 1254635; Page 164B; Enumeration District: 017

one that was not only based on nationality. George Gittinan and his brother had been born in Pennsylvania of Irish parents. Although the family name cannot guarantee their religious identity, they did grow up during a heated time of Irish Catholic hatred. Had the same discrimination been replaced to the Mid-West they may have been more selective in those they hired. Was it possible for a Masonic Lodge stereotype, more typical of the East Coast, to exist in a small newly-established Mid-West town where people depended upon one another and where most aspects of life revolved around a farming community? The number of non-farmer professionals and commercial members of the community are small when compared to those who were farming. Did farmers who had only recently acquired land, bearing in mind Morris was only established in 1871, have the time to commit to freemasonry? The Masonic Lodge as shown in the *Graceville* documentary was constructed in 1890 to replace an earlier wooden construction which was destroyed by fire. The date of the original lodge is unclear.<sup>666</sup>

The one outstanding feature which could lend to stereotype easily is the fact a Minister resided in Morris while a Catholic priest resided in Graceville. This alone indicated the religion of the areas but cannot by itself imply a bias existed. The two men who were sent by the Morris Board of Trade, Henry Hutchins and George McPherson, were also examined. Hutchins was born in Hampshire in England in 1844. It is unclear when Hutchins immigrated to the U.S. but he was a soldier in the U.S. army during the civil war for ten months in 1865 when he was 21 years of age. Connelly referred to Hutchins as a contractor but Hutchins described his profession as a painter on the census of 1880. Along with working as a painter he had acquired 160 acres of land in 1877 so it must be assumed he was breaking land or farming too. He died in 1889 and had been ill for a number of years prior to his death. His wife Mary applied for an invalid service pension in 1886 when Hutchins was 42 years of age.<sup>667</sup> George McPherson was born in 1849 in Canada; his parents were born in New York. It is unclear when McPherson moved to Minnesota but the 1875 census indicated he was living there with his brother William and William's wife Jennie who gave birth to her eldest son in Minnesota in the same year. A number of lodgers were residing with the McPherson

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<sup>666</sup> <http://www.morrismn.info/history.htm>

<sup>667</sup> *FamilySearch*(<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:NYWG-73K>), Henry Hutchins, 23 Jun 1844; citing EAST WELLOW, HAMPSHIRE, ENGLAND, reference ; FHL microfilm 1,041,257; Ancestry.com. *U.S. General Land Office Records, 1796-1907*, Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations Inc, 2008; *1880 Federal Census*; Census Place: Morris, Stevens, Minnesota; Roll: 635; Family History Film: 1254635; Page: 152B; Enumeration District: 017; Image: 0314; National Archives and Records Administration. *U.S., Civil War Pension Index: General Index to Pension Files, 1861-1934*. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations Inc, 2000.

family in 1875; one was from Norway and another was Prussian.<sup>668</sup> No census information for George McPherson could be found after 1875. Hutchins and McPherson were recent arrivals in Minnesota and would seem most likely to have been in the process of establishing themselves. It would seem improbable for both men to have been considered well established, influential men of the Morris community by 1880. All of the evidence regarding the Morris community would seem to suggest a diverse new settlement in the process of community building.

Lastly, no family with the exception of Connelly spoke of or implied bias. In a later chapter, some of the descendants of Nugent families were examined. This researcher put the question of discrimination to Barbara Butterworth whose ancestors were assisted by Nugent. Butterworth did not realise her family were a part of any scheme nor was she aware of her family's history. She stated she has no memory of any discrimination ever taking place to her or her family in the U.S. A similar question was put to Theresa Pimerick who was raised in Shieldsville in south east Minnesota in the 1930s. Theresa's only memories of 'teasing' occurred when her family continued to use a horse and cart when most families had converted to automobiles. She too felt she had never been subjected to religious discrimination having lived in south east Minnesota all her life.

### **Misunderstandings of Assisted Immigration to Minnesota in the 1880s**

Prior to Seosamh Ó Cuaig contacting the Connelly family in Graceville, Bridget Connelly and her immediate family had no knowledge of the history of their grandmother who was one of Nugent's immigrants. In 1988 Ó Cuaig arrived in Graceville having been invited there by a local politician called Dick Lane. Ó Cuaig and a schoolteacher from Spiddal, Sean Manning, were intrigued by the story of Nugent's immigrants. Ó Cuaig contacted the Graceville newspaper who wrote an article and in turn Dick Lane invited Ó Cuaig to Graceville. Ó Cuaig had discovered an article on Nugent's immigration scheme while researching Land League agitation and the famine of 1879.<sup>669</sup> Ó Cuaig and Bob Quinn

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<sup>668</sup> 1875 Minnesota State Census, Ancestry.com; Minnesota Historical Society. *Minnesota State Population Census Schedules, 1865-1905*. St. Paul, MN, USA: Minnesota Historical Society, 1977. Microfilm. Reels 1-47 and 107-164.

<sup>669</sup> Connelly, Bridget, *Forgetting Ireland*, pp 17- 23; Irish Migrants in New Communities: seeking the fair land? / edited by Michael Ó hAodha and Máirtín Ó Catháin, (Lexington Books, 2014), p. 19 Connelly states, 'It would take Joe Cooke's research trip to Minnesota, his radio shows (along with listener response), and a movie for Irish television (RTÉ) to teach us our history'.

of Gaelmedia produced the documentary *Graceville* which premiered in Ceol na Mara, An Spidéal, in September 1996.<sup>670</sup>

The documentary *Graceville*, accepts from the outset, the premise that the immigrants failed on the land. The stereotype that Irish labourers declined a rural existence in the United States after too many difficult years on the land in Ireland would seem to confirm an assumption of failure. Campbell states it is due to the focus given to ‘the less auspicious’ second phase of immigration to Minnesota that ‘stereotypical assertions about the Irish incapacity for rural life have been reinforced’.<sup>671</sup> Patrick Griffith is one example of an Irish man from the west of Ireland who became a farmer in western Minnesota in the first phase of immigration. Born in Donegal in 1831, Griffith immigrated to the United States in 1846. After spending some time in Pittsburgh he settled in Stevens County in Minnesota in 1878 where he farmed successfully. His son George A. Griffith resided in Graceville in 1905.<sup>672</sup>

The overarching theme of the *Graceville* documentary would seem to be an attempt to find blame for the failure on the land, but in doing so, a number of incorrect assumptions are made. The sentimental or emotional weight of the documentary depicts the immigrants as victims. Although there is no doubt that Nugent’s immigrant were victims, a greater understanding of the conditions the immigrants were leaving behind was required. A number of examples of incorrect assumptions are as follows. The documentary states that when the immigrants were in Boston, ‘it’s almost certain they were reluctant to leave’, however, no such choice had ever been available to the immigrants. The fact the immigrants were not given the opportunity to settle in St Paul upon arrival was considered by Ó Cuaig who questioned whether John Ireland did, ‘finally see that sending them west was against their will’. Implying the immigrants had a choice to settle in St Paul or Graceville, the presenter states, ‘the difference of opinion [between immigrants and John Ireland] was so strong in this case that there was little hope for the Bishop’s and priest’s scheme. When the scheme failed, the Connemara’s were vilified’. The premise implied is that Nugent’s immigrants could only fail and their failure lay with those who placed them on the prairie against their will.

Other controversial and unsubstantiated statements included that the Bishop ‘wheedled’ money from the people of St Paul. Another can be seen by referring to William Onahan as a ‘city big shot’. The narrative of the documentary pits the powerful men, John Ireland, Dillon

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<sup>670</sup> *Connacht Tribune* 13 September 1996; The documentary stated it examined the failed attempt to populate an area of land near St Paul ‘which had been forcibly taken from the native Americans’.

<sup>671</sup> Campbell, Malcolm, *Ireland’s New Worlds Immigrants, Politics, and Society in the United States and Australia, 1815-1922*, p. 66

<sup>672</sup> *Donegal News* 23 December 1905, p. 8



O'Brien and William Onahan against the vulnerable immigrants. A further narrative is that of the insider opposed to the outsider. Nugent's immigrants were seen as the outsiders while the settlers in Graceville were considered the insiders. The documentary leans too readily on the stereotypes of the Irish in America; Anglo-Protestant hatred towards Catholic Irish; Irish labourers' reluctance to farm in America; and the stereotypical pretensions of Catholic Irish American women. Connelly states that Ó Cuaig was 'able to unearth information that had never appeared in print and was not part of any official record, but known and passed down through families and communities'.<sup>673</sup> But what was the imprint that was left behind by those who were assisted by Nugent? How was the scheme recorded or remembered in Ireland and in particular in Connemara?

Following the events in Graceville, James Nugent continued to be welcomed in Ireland; in 1882 he was identified as an 'illustrious visitor' by *The Freeman's Journal* and described as the 'foremost pioneer' in assisting immigrants to leave Ireland. Nugent continued to support families to relocate to the Mid-West and west of America and had embarked upon a campaign to relocate five families in every Catholic congregation in the rural districts of the United States and North America.<sup>674</sup> In October 1882 Nugent attended a meeting of the Directors of the Catholic Colonisation Society at Chicago where he was introduced by John Ireland and promoted his new campaign as he had successfully made such arrangements throughout Canada and was endeavouring to do so in the West. *The Freeman's Journal* declared that efforts were underway to fill St Patrick's colony in Arkansas.<sup>675</sup> Dillon O'Brien was further held in esteem in Ireland. According to *The Freeman's Journal*, his death was announced with sadness in 1882. He was described as a 'conspicuous figure in Irish politics' that organised the colonies of Minnesota. He was further identified as the first to call upon the Irish in America to 'relieve their starving brethren at home' during the famine of 1880. Prior to his death he visited Ireland and upon his return to America he took part in the Land League movement there.<sup>676</sup>

In Connemara, assisted immigration schemes continued to be noted and spoken of in the early 1880s. In June 1881, six months after the difficult winter in Graceville, the *Galway Vindicator* described the immigration of almost 400 persons, three-quarters of whom were young girls, 'happy to be starting on their voyage'. The *Austrian* bound for Boston left

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<sup>673</sup> Connelly, B., 'Legends of the Graceville Connemaras' in *Irish Migrants in New Communities* edited by Micheál Ó hAodha and Máirtín Ó Catháin, p. 18

<sup>674</sup> *Freeman's Journal*, 10 July 1882, p. 2; *Freeman's Journal*, 24 October 1882, p. 5

<sup>675</sup> *Freeman's Journal* 16 October 1882, p. 5; *Skibbereen Eagle* 21 October 1882, p. 5

<sup>676</sup> *Freemans Journal* 6 March 1882, p. 6

Galway where the organisation was ‘so effective ... the passengers were put aboard, and the ship cleared in the space of three hours’. In the same month Vere Foster wrote to the *Galway Vindicator* requesting that £100,000 be raised to assist young men and women to leave Connaught and Donegal. In April 1883, an article entitled ‘The Emigration Mania’ stated 1,200 people from Galway had placed their names on lists to avail of ‘the free emigration promoted by the government and assisted by the board of guardians’. Those availing of the scheme, it was claimed, were employed artisans and working classes ‘who have good wages and constant employment, and yet they are anxious to leave home’. The cost to ratepayers was criticised as were the immigration schemes. ‘We require some great philanthropist with eloquence and powers to influence the people, to preach a crusade against this scheme of free emigration’. The *Galway Express* in the same month stated that Mr Wall the Government Emigration Commissioner, had visited the workhouse to inspect those availing of free emigration. Of the 1,821 applicants, 1,000 were passed and certified to leave. Although ‘free emigration’ appealed to those who sought to leave it was viewed with less optimism by those who had to pay for it. One man who appeared before the petty sessions but had successfully applied to leave, prompted the *Galway Express* to state, ‘the loss of such a man to the community cannot certainly be serious; but to transfer him and his family to America at public expense, would be simply an encouragement to idleness and dishonesty’. Although assisted emigration was viewed positively as an opportunity, complaints of loss of labourers were heard as factories struggled to find employees and domestic servants were not to be found ‘for love or money’.<sup>677</sup>

Nugent’s immigrants were not recalled in local press for over fifty years. In 1967 Nugent’s immigrants were remembered in an article entitled, ‘When Fifty Connemara Families Set Sail for the New World, the story of the Allan Shipping Line’ by C. Townley who worked in the library at University College, Galway. According to Townley ‘the voyage was by all accounts successful and we are told that “flattering accounts were sent home by passengers regarding their treatment on board on their way to Boston”’.<sup>678</sup> The story of Nugent’s immigrants was retold once more in 1986 in the *Connacht Tribune* beneath the title, ‘When the Irish fleeing Famine became “planters” in Minnesota’. This was the first account which identifies the name ‘Connemara’ as a word used to derisively describe an individual. A claim later made by Connelly.<sup>679</sup>

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<sup>677</sup> *The Galway Vindicator*, 25, 29 June 1881, 21, 25 April 1883; *The Galway Express* 21 April, 1883

<sup>678</sup> *The Connacht Tribune* 28 April 1967, p. 3

<sup>679</sup> *The Connacht Tribune* 28 November 1986, p. 25; Connelly, *Forgetting Ireland*, p. 18

There can be no doubt the history of assisted emigration was remembered in the west of Ireland, as in the years that followed the Nugent departure, thousands more were assisted to leave. Seosamh Ó Cuaig heard the stories of emigration from his neighbours but did not hear of the Nugent scheme until he accidentally discovered it when researching Land League efforts in 1880. Ó Cuaig and Connelly maintain that memories, even those that have been forgotten, retain the folklore or histories. They explain the loss of memory on events that people deliberately attempt to forget, however this may not be the case. The case of Nugent's emigrants can be seen as particularly suitable for a transnational study while the addition of memory greatly adds to its democratic nature in including the voice from below. However when that voice is transplanted, as in, taken from one location and transferred to another, does that story belong to the people, the land, is it the narrative as repeated by various generations? It would seem that others who were instrumental in the rediscovery of Nugent's emigrants as outlined by the documentary *Graceville* and in *Forgetting Ireland* were given little credit. Their participation has implications for the oral methodology applied by Connelly and must be reviewed.

In April 1988, Sean Manning as noted earlier was a teacher from Knock, Inverin, in county Galway who contacted Norman Patterson of the Minnesota Genealogical Society in an effort to discover more information of Nugent's scheme. Manning was originally from Dingle in county Kerry but had studied at University College Galway and started teaching in the Gaelic speaking area about 15 miles west of Galway City in 1958. According to Manning he 'took a keen interest in local history' and spent most of his spare time at it. While researching the crisis of 1879 Manning also discovered the story of Nugent's immigrants. Manning had undertaken a great deal of research in Ireland both in Dublin and Galway and had written to a number of people prior to his response from Patterson. Manning expressed an interest in Lawrence Flaherty who was born very close to where he was living in Inverin. In August of the same year Patterson responded to Manning and explained how he undertook a 'major investigation' in researching those who immigrated to Graceville in 1880. Part of Patterson's effort included driving to Graceville and Ortonville. It should be noted that Norman Patterson was a retired botanist who had worked with the U.S. Department of Agriculture for 25 years; he had also spent a number of years teaching and was an excellent researcher.

In October, and having received a package from Patterson, Manning wrote to him and stated, 'Good God man I am still reeling under the most interesting weight of information contained in the package and I am still wondering how a complete stranger and a man of your

age managed to do all that research'. Manning knew Ó Cuaig 'very well' and informed Patterson in 1988 that Ó Cuaig had intended to go to Graceville. Patterson met with Ó Cuaig and others in October 1988 at Scanlon's Pub in St Paul. Patterson recorded how Ó Cuaig had spoken on the radio in Ortonville and Morris and was guest speaker on two television shows at Alexandria. Ó Cuaig also spoke with residents of Graceville at this time. In 1992 Patterson wrote to Bridget Connelly in response to a call he had received from her. Just as Patterson had sent a package to Manning, he sent his research to Connelly along with maps. 'You might have seen the Austrian ship list before since I must have given Joe a copy of that'. It would seem those who initially began the research or rediscovery of Nugent's immigrants, which ultimately assisted the documentary *Graceville and Forgetting Ireland*, received little acknowledgement, however, it also raises the question as to how local was the folklore of Nugent's immigrants. It would seem a newspaper article of 1880 initiated a local response which led to an American researcher rediscovering the story and in turn passing that information back to the west of Ireland. Subsequently, this research was extended to Graceville where Ó Cuaig contacted Connelly.<sup>680</sup>

The oral history accounts of 'free emigration' from the west of Ireland are real. However, confusion lies in the fact that little is known of how many Connemara immigrants actually arrived in Minnesota in the 1880s. The Nugent scheme has been examined in great detail, however the immigrants who were assisted by later schemes funded by the Tuke Committee are less well known of. This leads to errors and assumptions, for example, Regan, Connelly and Ó Cuaig all state that Nugent's immigrants settled in the Connemara Patch in St Paul but there is insufficient evidence to support this claim, but no doubt, immigrants from Connemara did settle in St Paul and this, very well, may have included the Connemara Patch. The oral accounts do not contain untruths but a full picture or more information of all those who emigrated from Connemara to Minnesota would reveal far more information. On a number of occasions whilst presenting talks at the genealogical society in Minnesota, people stated to this researcher that they were the descendants of Nugent's immigrants but the evidence proved different. On another occasion, Patricia Taffe Driscoll wrote to the Minnesota Genealogical Society and stated her father was one of Nugent's immigrants. A census search indicated that although her father, Dr Michael A. Taffe, did reside in Graceville and worked as the Toqua and Big Stone veterinarian, he was born in 1886 which was five

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<sup>680</sup> Norman Patterson presented this researcher with a bound copy of his research in 1999. He had prepared the research to present to the Minnesota Genealogical Society. He sent the bound work to Beth Mullinax in 1995.

years after the arrival of Nugent's immigrants.<sup>681</sup> It should be noted that the talks at the genealogical society proved fruitful as it was where this researcher met the Green family and Norman Patterson.

In the course of this study, this researcher spoke with older residents of Irish heritage in Graceville in 2003 having being introduced to the community by the local parish priest during mass. No one recalled Nugent's immigrants and when prompted I was informed they had learned of the story from the documentary makers. Further in the summer of 2003 this researcher accompanied Tim Robinson of Connemara to Graceville, and whilst there, an impromptu canvas was taken. The sample size was very small as the population of Graceville was only 579 people in 2003. People were canvassed in shops and at the local school. Of the 18 people questioned only one person actually had heard the name Connemara and this was after an explanation had been provided to that individual's colleague. It was important that the canvass was undertaken despite the limited size as within weeks Bridget Connelly was reading from her publication and it was probable that after this time the meaning of Connemara as used in Graceville would have been more known of.

Lastly this researcher spoke with Kathleen Villiers-Tuthill in 2014 who has written about Connemara and its people for over thirty years.<sup>682</sup> She stated there was no point in attempting to contact the local community to investigate if people remember the emigration schemes of the 1880s as most people who could recall the 'free emigration' schemes had died. Villiers-Tuthill recalled how she spoke with members of the local community in the 1980s, and at that time, there was local knowledge of the Tuke schemes but no awareness of the Nugent scheme. 'To the best of my knowledge the story was not well known in the district'. Villiers-Tuthill came across the efforts of James Nugent, 'while going through the local newspapers in the National Library searching for material on Connemara in the latter half of the nineteenth century'. According to Villiers-Tuthill, it was the extended nature of the Tuke schemes along with the large numbers of people who left that allowed these particular schemes to be recalled, in that, they left a greater impact on the community. However, the Nugent scheme involved a smaller group of people and was a once off emigration effort.

Although it would seem the document-based evidence contradicts the folklore or oral accounts, history cannot be understood in terms of correlating or contradicting facts. It was most unlikely that alcohol was present in Graceville in the early years of the town's

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<sup>681</sup> A letter from Patricia Taffe Driscoll to Irish Genealogical Society, 2 September 2001.

<sup>682</sup> Conversation with Kathleen Villiers-Tuthill, 27 November 2014

development but it is probable, that at some time, alcohol was available. The lore however, is not necessarily, with this point in mind, actually about alcohol availability but a distrust and dislike for John Ireland. There could be no better way of removing the gloss from his reputation than implying he partook of a substance he abhorred which not only removed him from his 'perch' but further implied his reputation was tarnished. With regard to the perceptions of pretensions among the early settlers, this point too can be explained that at some stage people may have behaved this way. Dates and times can be fused along with the memories of generations. Stories can overlap, as one generation recalls memories from previous generations, modern layers can be added as each generation creates a mental image of the memories as they unfold. But this study is a focus on Nugent's immigrants and it is within those parameters this research is placed. There can be no aspect of the oral accounts that can be open for question, as it is the provider of the information that understands the facts to be as they have recalled them. As was seen by the memories of Irish Americans after the Famine, facts can get in the way of an understanding that people have and the sentiments are real. In this particular instance more information of how many people from Connemara actually relocated to Graceville and surrounding areas including St Paul could help broaden the conversations. In this broader context it is certainly most possible that poor people from Connemara settled in the Connemara Patch in St Paul and did drink alcohol in a saloon called the Bucket O'Blood as stated in the documentary *Graceville*. However as this study narrowly focuses on Nugent's scheme, the oral accounts and the evidentiary facts do not correlate.

In conclusion, there is one overwhelming factor that is almost completely lost in the oral accounts but may have enormous implications. James Nugent, the protagonist, is not mentioned by any of the individuals who provided information to Connelly. In fact, Nugent's contribution to the scheme is almost unnoticed. His presence or involvement in Graceville was equal to that of John Ireland. He visited and assessed the colony prior to the scheme being implemented, he was further a regular visitor to St Paul and south west Minnesota, he visited the colony and the homes of the immigrants in the immediate months after their arrival, but his presence is absent by all those who recall Nugent's immigrants. His character or presence was distinguished, in an earlier chapter, it was noted that while he was in Galway people dropped to their knees to seek his blessing. His reputation among Catholic Irish was held in the highest of regard. He did not abdicate his responsibility of his immigrants, but for his efforts he was not remembered. Once more, perhaps it is the silence itself that speaks. Lastly, although differences exist between the research presented in this study and that of the documentary-makers, it is important to note that the documentary-

makers went about their task in the usual way of documentary-makers. Not being historians themselves, they sought out ‘experts’ of one sort or another, either historians or the bearers of local lore.

## Conclusion

By early 1881 little had changed considering the outcry of destitution among the immigrants in Graceville. Nothing seemed to stop the demand to colonise Minnesotan lands. Dillon O’Brien left Minnesota in early March 1881 and did not return until the end of April after visiting several states in New England and having spent time in New York. O’Brien predicted there would be a ‘rush of immigrants’ to Minnesota in the following month.<sup>683</sup> In May 1881, the Catholic Immigration Society reported immigrants were arriving daily in large numbers. Most of the immigrants, according to the report had ‘very considerable sums of money with them’ and ‘were an intelligent appearing class, much above the average Irish immigrant’.<sup>684</sup> The immigrants were sent to Graceville and Avoca in Murray County. No doubt the debacle with Nugent’s immigrants was still to the fore of the minds of the officials of the Colonisation Bureau.

As the months rolled on in 1881 the failure of Nugent’s immigrants was placed at the door of the immigrants themselves. A lengthy article which came from a special correspondent of *The Chicago Tribune* appeared in *The Globe* in July 1881 and outlined in great detail John Ireland’s colonization schemes and the land company established by John Sweetman. It stated ships carrying 1,500 and 900 passengers respectively had landed in New York bound for the Minnesota prairie. In outlining the success of the colonisation programme the author felt it was remiss not to note Nugent’s immigrants, ‘a poor shiftless set of professional burglars ... the thrifty, the hard-working and willing workers should be confounded with the poor wretches who imposed themselves upon the Rev. Father Nugent, of Liverpool, and upon the kindly people of Minnesota’.<sup>685</sup>

Impoverished groups continued to arrive in Minnesota. In May 1883 *The Republican* reported 300 Connemara immigrants had arrived in Montreal destined for Minnesota.<sup>686</sup> Furthermore, members of the Catholic hierarchy continued to seek support to transfer Irish Catholics from the east coast to the prairies. A letter was received by Sweetman in February

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<sup>683</sup> *The Daily Globe*, 29 April, 1881

<sup>684</sup> *The Minneapolis Tribune*, 5 May 1881, *The Daily Globe*, 12 May 1881

<sup>685</sup> *The Daily Globe*, 17 July 1881

<sup>686</sup> *The Republican*, 5 May, 1883

1882 from the office of the Archbishop of Boston requesting farm land.<sup>687</sup> It would seem little harm was done to the overall immigration plans by the furore caused in the winter of 1880-81.

Regardless of the negative publicity surrounding Nugent's immigrants, the work of James Nugent, John Ireland, John Sweetman and many others continued. In March 1881 Nugent wrote to Sweetman that many people were leaving Liverpool for Minnesota, 'and among them some very substantive people', Nugent states inquiries were made to him about establishing businesses at Avoca. Nugent further states, 'the people from this side of the channel look to be a better lot of people with more go in them'.<sup>688</sup> In early 1881 it was John Ireland and James Nugent who made every effort to assist John Sweetman to transfer his immigrants from Meath. From Liverpool Nugent printed colonisation booklets and secured a 20 per cent discount for the voyage across the Atlantic of which he stated he must keep quiet about 'otherwise there would be a row with the steamship company'.<sup>689</sup> In February 1882 Nugent further informed Sweetman not to tell anyone of the rate or cost he is paying or the steamship company will interfere and prevent their efforts.<sup>690</sup>

John Ireland remained steadfastly an advocate of Catholic colonization and used his influence to assist those willing to invest in colonization. In February 1881, Ireland wrote to Sweetman,

Fortunately we were able to have the vote reconsidered ... this time we think we are safe. We have laboured hard to enlist in its favour our friends and their friends. The opposition arises from a latent fear that the bill being so comprehensive – corporations of all kinds will rush into the state, and occupy the lands, without forming settlements upon them. Your measure is quiet popular, and if your company had been in existence, we would have easily secured 'special' legislation in its favor.<sup>691</sup>

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<sup>687</sup> Letter from Office of the Archbishop of Boston to John Sweetman, 28 February 1882, from the Sweetman Family Papers, in the National Library of Ireland, Collection List No. 47, 598/2

<sup>688</sup> Letter from James Nugent to John Sweetman, 28 March 1881, from the Sweetman Family Papers, NLI, Collection List No. 156, MS 47,599/3

<sup>689</sup> Letter from James Nugent to John Sweetman, 6 March 1881, from the Sweetman Family Papers, NLI, Collection List No. 156, MS 47,599/3

<sup>690</sup> Letter from James Nugent to John Sweetman, 2 February 1882, from the Sweetman Family Papers, NLI, Collection List No. 156, MS 47,599/3

<sup>691</sup> Letter from John Ireland to John Sweetman, 19 February 1881, from the Sweetman Family Papers, NLI, Collection List No. 156, MS 47,598/2



Ireland in this correspondence once more takes the opportunity to advise Sweetman to consider some Irish-Americans for his settlement and adds, 'be careful in your selection of men – so much depends on your success. You ought to see the partner yourself: they should be of very sober habits, industrious, with some grains of pride, ashamed to beg etc.'<sup>692</sup> In March 1881, Ireland wrote to John Sweetman stating the 'act is all right at last ... the amendments, I think, cannot embarrass your operation'.<sup>693</sup>

The urgency with which the members of the Colonisation Bureau responded to the reports of destitution in Graceville may have had little to do with Nugent's immigrants and more to do with pending legislation and the efforts of wealthy Catholic investors. Furthermore such harsh criticisms put years of effort which had been made to improve the lives of Catholics and Irish Catholics at risk. This would appear to have been a critical point at this time. John Ireland's letter to Sweetman in March provides an insight to the concerns Ireland had with regard to legislation. 'It has been a difficult task to put the bill through the legislature, the cause of the difficulty being the rush now taking place for Minnesota lands and the fear that too much of the State domain might pass into the hands of foreigners'.<sup>694</sup> Ireland informs Sweetman that opposition to the bill was 'an argument in your hands in persuading your friends to invest in Minnesota. It shows that our lands do not go a begging for purchasers'. Ireland sincerely hoped Sweetman's company would be a success as he intended to conclude with his colonies to make way for Sweetman's work which he intended on cooperating with freely as, according to Ireland, Sweetman had 'entered upon a work, which, under a religious and national aspect is a glorious one for church and country'.<sup>695</sup> Sweetman had invested a considerable sum by this time in colonisation efforts: in February 1881 Ireland received £2,000 for the purchase of lands and immediately instructed his agent John O'Connor to travel to Avoca to obtain the deeds. The total amount of funding received

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<sup>692</sup> Letter from John Ireland to John Sweetman, 19 February 1881, from the Sweetman Family Papers, NLI, Collection List No. 156, MS 47,598/2

<sup>693</sup> Letter from John Ireland to John Sweetman, 4 March 1881, from the Sweetman Family Papers, NLI, Collection List No. 156, MS 47, 598/2; Gregory Kinney and Lydia Lucas, *A Guide to the Records of Minnesota's Public Lands*, MHS Division of Archives and Manuscripts 1985, Printed with funding from the Legislative Commission on Minnesota Resources, p. 33. Although Minnesota legislation regarding land in 1881 refers to rights of way, swamp land, etc. it is the legislation which concerns lands sold to private parties which were exempt from real estate taxes becoming subject to taxation that may have primarily concerned John Ireland and John Sweetman.

<sup>694</sup> Letter from John Ireland to John Sweetman, 4 March 1881, from the Sweetman Family Papers, NLI, Collection List No. 156, MS 47, 598/2;

<sup>695</sup> Letter from John Ireland to John Sweetman, 4 March 1881, from the Sweetman Family papers, NLI, Collection List No. 156, MS 47, 598/2;

by John Ireland from John Sweetman in early March was \$34,633.<sup>696</sup> By July 1881 Sweetman had invested \$100,000 in his colony at Avoca and had purchased land to build a home on Buffalo Lake.<sup>697</sup>

Although John Ireland remained an advocate of Catholic colonization, James Nugent remained an advocate of the poorest who placed in him their trust as they journeyed to a new world. In a letter in 1883 Nugent defended Sweetman's immigrants who too left the prairies not wishing to farm: it seems Nugent continued to understand the need of the immigrants. He stated he had no hesitation in assisting people to the western prairies as they had the ability to become wealthy and comfortable in five years. 'Look at the present condition of the Connemara people! Is there one family out of the whole crowd that is not in a position which they could never have hoped for at home'. The difficulty which prevailed throughout the whole episode during the winter of 1880-81 in Graceville was undermined from the outset by little understanding of extreme poverty. Perhaps it is appropriate to conclude with Nugent when he said, 'Poor Dillon O'Brien did not know how to handle them, or yet did he know there were such people in existence. Hence he and others branded them as paupers'.<sup>698</sup>

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<sup>696</sup> Letter from John Ireland to John Sweetman, 3 February, 4 March, 1881, from the Sweetman Family papers, NLI, Collection List No. 156, MS 47, 598/2;

<sup>697</sup> *The Daily Globe*, 17 July, 1881

<sup>698</sup> Letter from James Nugent to John Sweetman, 2 February 1883, from the Sweetman Family Papers, NLI, Collection List No. 156, MS 47, 599/3

## **Chapter 5: The Tuke Assisted Emigration Schemes of the 1880s**

James Nugent and John Ireland continued to work to assist people to leave Ireland for Minnesota following the difficulties that surrounded Nugent's immigrants in Graceville. The following year a more ambitious plan was put into action by members of Parliament and the Tuke Committee, to transfer the poorest of Ireland to the United States. Nugent's efforts were closely scrutinised by philanthropic Quaker James Hack Tuke who had separately recognised the need to support the poorest of the far west of Ireland by funding families and communities to emigrate. Tuke had visited Connemara during the Famine years; he had examined and wrote of the conditions of the people of Connemara and had advocated improvements. His recommendations included reducing the population of the far west of Ireland so that land, when cleared, could be distributed to improve small holdings. As previously noted, the concept of removing or relocating people from England and Ireland had existed and had been implemented throughout the nineteenth century. However, no such removal of families or communities had occurred in the far west of Ireland where the challenges of the unique environment and the poverty of the inhabitants was greater than other regions within Ireland. Nugent was the first to implement a plan that assisted the very same people that Tuke had long been interested in.

Furthermore, Nugent's plan was a philanthropic effort which was funded by charity and primarily organised by members of the Catholic Church. Previous schemes such as Robinson's in the 1820s and Foster's in the 1850s were supported by Parliament and ultimately benefitted the government by quelling disturbances in the Blackwater region in the 1820s and by ridding it of the cost of workhouse inmates following the Famine. Nugent's efforts – the selection and transfer of immigrants along with the less successful attempt at colonisation – were adapted and adjusted by the Tuke Committee. Nugent's scheme cannot be judged solely by the 35 families he assisted to emigrate but by the number of immigrants that left by way of chain migration following the initial transfer of 1880 and by the plans implemented by the Tuke Committee. Within a decade of Nugent's scheme over 10,000 people had been assisted to leave while many more thousands subsequently immigrated by way of chain migration. It is in this context that Nugent's scheme can be assessed. Nugent's success was replicated by the Tuke Committee while the more challenging aspects of assisted colonisation were reconsidered. Had the difficulties of the winter of 1880 not occurred then these same challenges may have faced the Tuke Committee at some stage. The experience brought to bear by Nugent, Ireland and Sweetman, allowed the Tuke Committee to succeed.

Had the Tuke Committee confronted difficulties similar to those that occurred in Graceville during the winter of 1880, then perhaps the schemes would have ended prematurely and much more abruptly. Consequently it is important to examine the work of the Tuke Committee and identify the links and parallels that existed between those who worked with Nugent and those who worked with members of the Tuke Committee.

The concept of providing large tracts of agricultural land to immigrant families was considered by Canadian authorities and railway companies in the U.S. in the 1870s. In 1890 James Hack Tuke told a Parliamentary Select Committee on Colonisation that larger immigration schemes such as that of Sir George Stephens had failed due to the unwillingness of Canadian politicians to collect rents for land.<sup>699</sup> James Nugent's was the first such scheme [involving Irish immigrants] to put into practice a system of supports which was identified as assisted colonisation as opposed to assisted immigration and it was with the implementation of Nugent's scheme that the Tuke Committee was able to examine the shortcoming of assisted colonisation and adjust their efforts accordingly. Without Nugent and the families he assisted the Tuke Committee may have provided a costly and charitable beginning for immigrants but one which may have been short-lived. However by recognising the challenges faced by Nugent and John Ireland, the Tuke Committee focused on gaining immediate employment for newly-arriving immigrant families as opposed to providing farms which could only offer income after crops were harvested and sold. The method by which immigrants could provide for themselves within weeks after arriving in the U.S. further saved funding which in turn supported more families to leave the destitution of the west of Ireland.

It was during the early 1880s that the Tuke Committee assisted almost 10,000 people from the west of Ireland to leave for North America. The Tuke Committee was successful primarily because of the tremendous personal commitment of James Hack Tuke and the efforts of those who supported him. The Committee's work was further assisted by a pro-immigration climate which evolved albeit briefly from positive reports of immigration groups which preceded those efforts of the Tuke Committee. Assisted immigration as a concept of alleviating poverty had been applied by various philanthropic individuals and groups from the early 1860s.<sup>700</sup> However during this period no effort had been made to alleviate the

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<sup>699</sup> *Report from the Select Committee on colonisation; together with the proceedings of the committee, minutes of evidence, and appendix*, HC 1890 (354), pp 200-1, qq 3408

<sup>700</sup> The philanthropic endeavors of the late Victorian era included many efforts to assist the poorest of British society. One manner of improvement was assisting people to emigrate and a great number of individuals and smaller organisations participated in this undertaking. These included various Poor Law Unions, Maria Susan

condition of the poorest of the west of Ireland by such methods. It was not until 1880 when James Nugent and a number of prominent civic and business men from Liverpool arrived in Ireland that assisted immigration from the west of Ireland was considered. Most attempts in the few decades prior to 1880 to assist people to leave were concentrated on the visible slums of Britain's over-populated cities.

The importance of Nugent's colonisation scheme remains to be fully realised. It would appear the negative publicity surrounding those he assisted resulted in confining Nugent to a paragraph in the historiography of Minnesota's Catholic colonies. When the work of those who followed him is considered, credit must then be given to Nugent for his ground-breaking efforts in the west of Ireland where transport, terrain, communications and lack of trust created difficulties. Although Nugent, John Ireland and Sweetman continued to support assisted immigration programmes after the early 1880s they never personally engaged to the same extent as they had in the initial years.<sup>701</sup> Unfortunately this had a detrimental outcome for the great number of Catholics along the east coast of the United States by denying them the opportunity to avail of an independent living on the Mid-West prairie. The poorest Irish Catholics of the west of Ireland were more fortunate as the efforts of Nugent, Ireland and Sweetman were examined by others who put in place the most ambitious plan of immigration and in that process transferred the largest group of immigrants of the nineteenth century.

The methods of immigration and colonisation applied by Nugent, Ireland and Sweetman were examined by James Hack Tuke. He had journeyed through Minnesota with John Ireland and James Nugent in 1878 and had interviewed settlers. It cannot be stated that Tuke replicated the ideals of Nugent and John Ireland; rather he was part of the greater debate considering ways to improve the lives of impoverished Irish Catholics. However, it was the tangible efforts of Nugent, Ireland and Sweetman which were closely examined by Tuke before he undertook his effort to relieve poverty by assisting families to leave. In a letter to Sweetman in March 1881 Tuke inquired of the 'practical beginnings' of Sweetman's scheme. Tuke further asked Sweetman to outline the class of emigrants who were most suited

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Rye, Annie MacPherson, Cardinal Manning, Louisa Birt, Catholic Protection Society of Liverpool, London's Children's Home, Boys Farm School of Birmingham, Lady Hobart and the East London Family Emigration Fund, Mr William Quarrier of Glasgow, Sisters of Mercy, Earl of Shaftesbury, Reverend Mr Stevenson, Edward Richardson, John T. Middlemore and Thomas John Barnardo. The Reverend G.R. Wynne, of Killarney, sent out three or four hundred labourers and their families to the North-West of Canada in the early 1880s.

<sup>701</sup> Although Nugent limited his involvement in assisted immigration he did continue to assist small groups to leave. From 1879 to 1883 Nugent assisted at least 79 persons to immigrate to Canada, according to J.H., Lefroy, of The British Association in Canada: *A paper read before the fellows of the Royal Colonial Institute*, January 13, 1885, with the discussion ... Foreign and Commonwealth Office Collection, (1885), p.27

to the prairie.<sup>702</sup> The importance of Sweetman's experience can be seen in a further letter Tuke wrote to Sweetman in April 1882. Tuke had invited Sweetman to a meeting at the Duke of Bedford's residence where a number of influential gentlemen had gathered. Tuke identified Sweetman's colonisation efforts as 'excellent work'; however Sweetman did not attend the meeting as his invitation has been misdirected which caused Tuke great upset.<sup>703</sup> Tuke, just as Nugent, Ireland and Sweetman had before him, recognised the need to assist those who had little or nothing. In the same letter Tuke stated he had read Sweetman's pamphlet and commented, 'I see that you speak of each man, bringing out \$300, my poor friends could not bring out 300 pennies'.<sup>704</sup>

The success of Sweetman's colonies was not solely noted by those interested in colonisation or assisted immigration. Newspapers provided various accounts of the success of Sweetman's Minnesota colony. In November 1881 *The Irish Times* stated the settlers were 'doing remarkably well, having secured their crops, and realised handsome prices for potatoes, corn and flax, raised on the first breaking'.<sup>705</sup> Tuke and Sweetman corresponded with one another throughout the period Tuke was involved with assisting people to immigrate in the 1880s. In April 1882 Tuke wrote to Sweetman from Clifden to inform him that two men and their families were ready to go to Sweetman's Currie colony. According to Tuke, one man was a carpenter who was 'first rate'. Tuke outlined to Sweetman how he was so particular in the choice of persons he was sending. In the same letter Tuke stated that over 1000 people had that same day applied to emigrate. At an unannounced visit to Mulranney a further 300 people had requested to leave. According to Tuke, 'the poverty of the country is beyond description'.<sup>706</sup>

The fact that Sweetman accepted impoverished families from the Tuke scheme is surprising and may attest to the mutual respect which existed as by 1882 Sweetman's enthusiasm for colonisation had diminished. In May 1882 Sweetman wrote from Currie, Minnesota to the secretary of the Irish American Colonisation Company in Dublin, Charles Blackney. He stated there was a great depression due to the wet spring which followed a poor harvest of the previous year. He further stated most of the settlers were working well but

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<sup>702</sup> Letter from James Hack Tuke to John Sweetman, 23 March 1881, from the Sweetman Family Papers, at the National Library of Ireland, Collection List No. 156, MS 47, 597/4

<sup>703</sup> Letters from James Hack Tuke to John Sweetman, 1 and 19<sup>th</sup> April 1882, from the Sweetman Family Papers, N.L.I., Collection List No. 156, MS 47, 597/4

<sup>704</sup> Letters from James Hack Tuke to John Sweetman, 17 April 1882, from the Sweetman Family Papers, N.L.I., Collection List No. 156, MS 47, 597/4

<sup>705</sup> *The Irish Times*, 30 November, 1881

<sup>706</sup> Letters from James Hack Tuke to John Sweetman, 18 April 1882, from the Sweetman Family Papers, N.L.I., Collection List No. 156, MS 47, 597/4

there were five or six he was getting rid of as they were 'good for nothing'. By this time Sweetman had decided against extending the Irish American Colonisation Company: in a letter to the directors of the company he informed them he was going to stop further investments on the stock exchange. With a good harvest predicted and with cattle thriving in June of that year Sweetman continued to decline to sell more share stocks.<sup>707</sup> His efforts in support of immigration may have been placing a financial strain on Sweetman by this stage.

### **Support for Assisted Immigration**

Although the government continued to support immigration schemes after the 1850s it did not provide grants. Instead government support came in the form of loans to state bodies with lending conditions which were beyond the means of many Poor Law Unions in Ireland. In the ten years from 1871 to 1880, unions, some with the assistance of government grant aid, had only supported 4,600 persons to leave Ireland at a cost of £12,570. Tuke calculated this amount as a mere £2 15s per head. When compared with the numbers of people emigrating during this period the insignificance of the government assistance was evident. Between 1871 and 1880 an estimated 600,000 people had emigrated from Ireland with nearly 100,000 having emigrated in 1880 alone.<sup>708</sup> Government support was important as it involved an official network which provided ease of communication and access to resources along with a financial commitment which was challenging for philanthropic organisations to garner. Assisting immigrants was a costly business and a direct correlation existed between financial resources and the success of immigrants.

By the 1880s the merits of assisting families to immigrate was accepted by a number of organisations. From the 1860s certain trade unions had provided grants for workers to emigrate but it was not until the depression of the 1880s that such trade unions began to question the efficacy of emigration.<sup>709</sup> Also by the early 1880s a great number of publications advocated group immigration schemes to Britain's colonies. In 1881, George F. Trent who had been involved in estate management in Ireland for 40 years wrote that of 99 cases out of 100 if given £500 or less would 'eagerly grasp' the opportunity to leave for Canada or the

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<sup>707</sup> Letters from John Sweetman to Charles Blackney, Secretary of the Irish American Colonisation Company, 10 May 1882, from the Sweetman Family Papers, N.L.I., Collection List No. 156, MS 47, 599/7

<sup>708</sup> Tuke, James H., 'Ought emigration from Ireland be assisted?' in *Contemporary Review*, (London, 1882) pp11-12

<sup>709</sup> Erickson, Charlotte, 'The Encouragement of Emigration by British Trade Unions, 1850-1900' in *Population Studies*, Vol. 3, No. 3 (December 1949), pp 250-52; Horn, Pamela, Agricultural Trade Unionism and Emigration, 1872-1881, *The Historical Journal*, 15 (1972)

Cape.<sup>710</sup> According to Bernard Fitzpatrick, M.P. for Portarlinton, reclaiming land as a method of alleviating poverty was ‘the most hopeless of all the schemes advocated for Ireland’.<sup>711</sup> Irish Liberal, W.M. Torrens M.P. for Finsbury, recognised migratory labourers from the west of Ireland as having the required traits to succeed at colonisation. In a speech in 1881 he stated these traits included a ‘readiness for rough work for ready money, and addiction to the permanent possession of land’.<sup>712</sup> Torrens advocated a transplantation treaty which was considered by the Canadian government whereby immigrants from Ireland were to be encouraged to immigrate to Manitoba. Torrens emphasised the importance of the language used when encouraging destitute Irish to leave which was that of immigration and not of emigration. According to Torrens, the Governor General of Canada proposed erecting temporary homesteads and turning over the soil for the sake of planting a crop before immigrants arrived.<sup>713</sup>

Other proponents of assisted immigration included Frederick Verney who had accompanied Major Gaskell in supervising the distribution of relief on behalf of the Marlborough fund in 1880. Verney who wrote about his experience, stated three-fourths of the people of west Galway and Connemara wished to emigrate and that families with a sufficient number of able-bodied bread-winners should be first selected for emigration. Verney recommended free emigration for the poorest with ‘nothing less than a government agency backed by public funds’ to fund the cost of immigration.<sup>714</sup> The Bessborough commission established to examine the impact of the 1870 Land Act published its findings in 1881 and encouraged assisted emigration as means of alleviating distress in the west of Ireland. The O’Conor Don stated state-aided emigration that supported whole families to leave was required as opposed to only the ‘strong, and active, and intelligent youth of the country’ leaving.<sup>715</sup> The Richmond Commission further advocated state-aided emigration but

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<sup>710</sup> Trench, George F., *The land question: Are the landlords worth preserving? Or, Forty years’ management of an Irish estate* from Earl Grey Pamphlets Collection, (1881), Durham University Library, pp 42-43

<sup>711</sup> Fitzpatrick, Bernard, *Ireland’s Brighter Prospects* in Bristol Selected Pamphlets, (1881), University of Bristol Library, p.23

<sup>712</sup> Torrens, W.M., *Imperial and Colonial partnership in emigration* in Bristol Selected Pamphlets, (1881), University of Bristol Library, p.6

<sup>713</sup> Torrens, W.M., *Imperial and Colonial partnership in emigration* in Bristol Selected Pamphlets, (1881), University of Bristol Library, pp 7, 10

<sup>714</sup> Verney, Frederick, *The People and the country of West Galway and Connemara* in Bristol Selected Pamphlets, (1880), University of Bristol Library, p.9

<sup>715</sup> The O’Connor Don in *Report of the Commission of Inquiry into the Workings of the Landlord and Tenant (Ireland) Act, 1870, and the Amending Acts; with the Evidence, Appendices and Index*, (Bessborough Commission), H.C. 1881, (2779), xviii, p. 51



stressed two conditions were required for success, the first was that families were to be funded and that they were to be accompanied by their clergy.<sup>716</sup>

In 1880, the Liberals under Gladstone took office and parliament once more saw the merits of assisted immigration as a response to acute distress. James Tuke with letters of introduction from the Marlborough and Mansion House committees' visited Connemara and Donegal in 1880 and wrote graphic descriptions of the poverty he encountered for *The Times*.<sup>717</sup> In assessing the distress Tuke stated the government could not simply turn its back on the poorest in the west of Ireland as 'leaving the malaria of discontent' could spread the 'contagion' of land agitation 'over the whole of the British Islands'.<sup>718</sup> According to Tuke the reason why people did not emigrate from the west of Ireland was lack of means. Furthermore, the conditions under which unions could borrow to fund emigration made it impossible for Guardians to consider as the risk of collection was placed upon the Board along with this the Board had to make arrangements for the transport and reception of the emigrants. Tuke noted the high number of evictions which had taken place in the Clifden Union where up to eighty families had been removed. Tuke suggested the Relieving Officer who was in attendance when evictions were taking place, should be empowered to offer emigration as an alternative to the workhouse and prepare lists accordingly.<sup>719</sup> The cost of maintaining a family of five in a workhouse for a year was calculated by Tuke as £47 13s while the cost of assisting a family to leave was calculated at £50 but payable over twenty-five years. As such the immediate outlay for a union annually to assist 100 families to emigrate was the cost of keeping five families in a workhouse for one year. Tuke advocated interest free loans and free grants to assist families.<sup>720</sup>

In 1880 Tuke visited North America once more; he was accompanied by Vere Foster and John Sweetman. Tuke travelled from the eastern states of the U.S. to the North-West of Canada in an effort to find suitable lands for immigration purposes. Minnesota in the U.S. was considered along with land in Manitoba which was north of Minnesota in Canada. The

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<sup>716</sup> *Parliamentary Report from her Majesty's Commissioners on Agriculture* (Richmond Commission), HC 1881, (2778), xv, p. 7, 24. This was also the opinion of Lieut. Col. G.R. Deasy p.964 q.26296

<sup>717</sup> *The Times*, 27 March 1880, 12 May 1880

<sup>718</sup> Tuke, James H., 'Ought emigration from Ireland be assisted?' in *Contemporary Review*, (April 1882) p.10

<sup>719</sup> Tuke, James H., 'Ought emigration from Ireland be assisted?' in *Contemporary Review*, (April 1882) pp 13, 15

<sup>720</sup> Tuke, James H., 'Ought emigration from Ireland be assisted?' in *Contemporary Review*, (April 1882) p. 16

climates and topographies of Minnesota and Manitoba were similar in that excellent land existed for farming but extreme weather conditions prevailed in winter. Furthermore, the success and support of John Ireland in promoting Catholic colonies in Minnesota led Tuke to the Mid-West and in particular to Minnesota. In response to his inquiries Tuke stated that success was assured in the U.S. when labourers and small farmers were placed away from the cities. Tuke in agreement with Nugent and John Ireland was not prepared to abandon emigrants at North American ports. According to Tuke, immigrants left to fester in the great seaports of the east were as 'degraded as those in the ports of Liverpool and Glasgow'.<sup>721</sup>

### **Canadian Government Support for Assisted Immigration**

In September 1880, W.E. Forster, Chief Secretary of Ireland, friend and fellow-Quaker, introduced Tuke to Sir John McDonald, Canadian Prime Minister, and Sir Alexander Gault, resident Minister in Ireland for Canada. Tuke discussed the prospects of emigration to Manitoba in Canada. The Canadian Government had benevolently provided £100,000 during the 1879-80 agricultural crises for long term relief works including the building of 26 harbours along the west coast of Ireland to encourage fishing.<sup>722</sup> From 1872 Canada's National Policy aimed to populate the prairies through immigration and to industrialise through tariff protection.<sup>723</sup> In December 1880 the Canadian Government introduced a scheme which gave grants of 160 acres of land in Manitoba to European immigrants with an opportunity to acquire a further 160 acres. Ireland was an ideal place in which to locate farmers and encourage them to settle in Canada because of the distress and overpopulation which existed there. Ireland could also satisfy the demand for agricultural labourers and railroad workers which constantly existed in Canada. Under the terms of the legislation the Canadian government wanted a system put in place to control the levels of emigration from Ireland.<sup>724</sup>

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<sup>721</sup> Tuke, James H., 'Ought emigration from Ireland be assisted?' in *Contemporary Review*, (April 1882) p.21

<sup>722</sup> Moran Gerard, 'James Hack Tuke and Assisted Emigration from Galway and Mayo in the 1880s', in Mary Clancy (ed.), *The Emigrant Experience*, (Galway, 1991), p.72; 'State Aided Emigration from Ireland to Canada in the 1880s', in the *Canadian Journal of Irish Studies*, 20:2 (Quebec, 1994) p.3

<sup>723</sup> Timothy J. Hatton, 'Emigration from the UK, 1870-1913 and 1950-1998', *European Review of Economic History*, Vol. 8, No. 2 (Oxford, 2004), p.156

<sup>724</sup> Moran, Gerard 'State Aided Emigration to Canada in the 1880s', *Canadian Journal of Irish Studies*, 20:2 p.3

The Canadian Prime Minister's proposal for Catholic resettlement received the endorsement of the Archbishop of Toronto, John Lynch, who had up to this time from the 1860s continually opposed immigration to the urban centres of North America. The role of the Catholic Church cannot be underestimated in local communities and in the newly established immigrant colonies. Lynch's attitude changed when McDonald offered a large tract of land in Manitoba for Catholic resettlement and by 1880 a number of Catholic settlements had been established which may have served to reassure Lynch. Furthermore, despite the warnings not to relocate to North American cities Catholics continued to arrive in great numbers. The new Catholic settlements appealed to Lynch to the extent that he travelled to Ireland in the spring of 1881 to encourage Irish farmers to take up the Canadian government's offer.<sup>725</sup> At a local level Tuke capitalised on the support of Catholic priests who he ensured accompanied emigrants on their voyages and in some instances remained with the immigrants where they settled.<sup>726</sup>

Although James Nugent did not independently assist large immigrant groups to leave after 1880 he did work directly with members of the Tuke Fund. In a letter to *The Times* in December 1882 Sydney Buxton, honorary secretary of the Fund, referred to Rev. James Nugent and Howard Hodgkin as committee members who had visited the U.S. and Canada in 1882 on behalf of the Tuke fund. Hodgkin further stated Archbishop Lynch had used his powerful influence in Ontario to promote the work of Catholic immigration and the efforts of the Tuke Committee.<sup>727</sup> The Canadian government prior to 1880 had been opposed to establishing purely Irish colonies. Bishop Ireland too considered it of great importance for Irish settlers to be included in colonies with other Catholic immigrant groups.<sup>728</sup> Assisted immigration to Canada was first considered in the 1850s when Reverend Dean Kirwin, vicar general of the Diocese of Kingston, Ontario, established the Irish American Aid Society in

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<sup>725</sup> Ibid.

<sup>726</sup> Tessa English, 'James Hack Tuke & Assisted Emigration from the West of Ireland in the 1880s', *In Search of a Better Life British and Irish Migration* edited by Graham Davis, (The History Press, Gloucestershire, 2011), p.163

<sup>727</sup> *The Times*, 21 December 1882; 'State-Aided Emigration and Mr Tuke's Fund', letter to *The Freeman* from Howard Hodgkin, 3 December 1883, p. 9-10 in 'Reports and Papers Relating to the Proceedings of the Committee of the Tuke fund for Assisting Emigration from Ireland during the year 1882, 1883 and 1884'

<sup>728</sup> Tuke, James H., 'Irish Emigration' *The Nineteenth Century*, (February, 1889) p.365

1855.<sup>729</sup> The Society was unsuccessful in a nativist climate which feared the massive influx of uneducated and unskilled Irish paupers. Enraged Protestants in western Ontario and the American Mid-West viewed the schemes as a papist plot ‘to establish an inland Catholic empire’.<sup>730</sup> A number of decades later the new legislation of 1880 was not adverse to settlements which were solely Catholic and Irish.

Under proposals worked out between Tuke and the Canadian authorities Irish immigrants were afforded the opportunity to acquire a grant of 160 acres in exchange for a £2 fee to the Canadian Dominion Land Office.<sup>731</sup> Immigrants were also to receive assisted passage from Liverpool to an American or Canadian port. Those that Tuke desperately wanted to help did not have the £2 required but with a commitment from government this cost was covered. Sadly Tuke’s proposal never got underway due to the refusal of the Canadian authorities to take responsibility for the collection of the £2 fee which was to be paid in instalments by the immigrants.<sup>732</sup> According to Tuke the view of the Canadian government was that it might lead to difficulties during elections and cause political trouble if they had to collect the instalments as they became due.<sup>733</sup>

Despite a number of setbacks Tuke favoured Canada over the U.S. as a destination for resettlement as he felt it was easier to deal with a British colony as opposed to a foreign government. Furthermore, land was being offered for free in Canada whereas in the U.S. land had to be purchased at a cost of 10s to 30s per acre.<sup>734</sup> In 1881 Tuke set out his proposals for assisted emigration in an article in *The Nineteenth Century* and set up a public subscription fund to assist emigrants to leave. Tuke estimated the cost to relocate a family of five and provide for them for the first year was £100.<sup>735</sup> Although Tuke recommended Canadian colonies he further identified the Catholic colonies of Minnesota and Iowa as places which offered the ‘greatest possible advantages for the settler’. The Tuke scheme was similar to the Nugent and Sweetman schemes. The cost of transport was to be funded along with finances

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<sup>729</sup> Riforgiato, Leonard P., ‘Bishop John Timmons, Archbishop John Hughes and Irish Colonization: A Clash of Episcopal Views on the Future of the Irish and the Catholic Church in America’ in William Pencak, Selma Berrol and Randall M. Miller (eds), *Immigration to New York* (New York, 1991) p. 44

<sup>730</sup> Ibid., p.45

<sup>731</sup> Tuke, James H., ‘Ought Emigration from Ireland be Assisted?’ in *Contemporary Review* (Apr., 1882) p.16

<sup>732</sup> Moran Gerard, ‘State Aided Emigration from Ireland to Canada in the 1880s’, pp 3-4

<sup>733</sup> *Report from the Select Committee on colonisation; together with the proceedings of the committee, minutes of evidence, and appendix*, HC 1890 (354), p.201 q.3408

<sup>734</sup> Tuke, James H., ‘Irish Emigration’ in *Nineteenth Century* (June 1889), p. 359

<sup>735</sup> Tuke, James H., ‘Ought Emigration from Ireland be Assisted?’ in *Contemporary Review* (Apr., 1882) p.16

to build a modest dwelling and to purchase the implements required to commence farming. Repayments were to be spread over a considerable number of years so as to ensure farmers were not overburdened with debt.<sup>736</sup> Although Tuke's plan to assist whole families was considered revolutionary it is apparent from this study of assisted immigration he was not the first to consider whole families from the most impoverished regions of Ireland.<sup>737</sup>

## The Tuke Fund

Tuke's article on Irish emigration along with the sustained poverty of the early 1880s and an increase in the number of evictions in the early months of 1882 encouraged a number of influential men to meet to discuss assisted immigration. On the 31 March 1882 the Tuke Fund was established with the Duke of Bedford as President. Twenty-seven members of parliament including W.H. Smith, W.E. Forester, H.S. Northcote and Samuel Whitbread became committee members. The aims of the committee were to foster immigration of whole families from poorer districts of the west of Ireland and to provide them with the financial assistance to leave. The funding was to be raised by private subscriptions and on the night the committee was established £8,000 was donated by the committee members.<sup>738</sup>

The guidelines of the Tuke Committee only permitted consideration of families who were engaged in agriculture where most of the members were over the age of twelve. Each family had to have members who could provide for the family, and the workers in each family had to be in the proportion of one to three excluding a wife who was not to be considered a worker outside the home. Other requirements were that at least one member of the family had to be able to speak English. Townspeople, trades people or single persons were not to be considered and it was hoped emigrants would contribute to the scheme.<sup>739</sup> Tuke cared for every detail of the emigrants; those who had been evicted generally had little

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<sup>736</sup> James Hack Tuke, 'Ought Emigration from Ireland be Assisted?' in *Contemporary Review* (Apr., 1882) p.17

<sup>737</sup> Moran, G., 'State Aided Emigration from Ireland to Canada in the 1880s' p.4

<sup>738</sup> James Hack Tuke, Report on Emigration from Ireland: Being the Report of Mr Tuke's Fund Together With Statements By Mr Tuke and Major Gaskell, 'Reports and Papers Relating to the Proceedings of the Committee of Mr Tuke's Fund for Assisting Emigration from Ireland during the year 1882, 1883 and 1884', p.4; Edward Fry, *James Hack Tuke: a Memoir* (London, Macmillan & Co., 1899), pp 157-8

<sup>739</sup> Instructions to Relieving Officers in Taking Down Names of Applicants for Emigration, 1883, 'Reports and Papers Relating to the Proceedings of the Committee of the Tuke fund for Assisting Emigration from Ireland during the years 1882, 1883 and 1884', p.185

or no clothing so Tuke granted sums from £3 to £6 to outfit them. Suitable clothing was not to be found locally so the committee set up clothing depots and clothing stores in Letterfrack, Clifden, Carna and Galway.<sup>740</sup> The management of the clothing was undertaken by Mr C. Taylor Kelly of Messrs Pim of Dublin. Tuke had been a long time friend with fellow Quaker family the Pims. The work of clothing the emigrants was demanding and frequently obliged Taylor Kelly to travel all night on cars in order to reach remote centres. During the latter part of the emigration schemes Taylor Kelly had to travel 30 to 40 miles on a rough cart with the clothing with him due to a boycott in one district.<sup>741</sup>

Tuke decided Galway was the best port to leave from as the alternatives meant long journeys to Liverpool or Queenstown. Those who lived far from where they had to embark were assisted with transport. Emigrants from Oughterard and Clifden embarked at Galway while Mayo emigrants embarked at Blacksod Bay near Belmullet and were landed at Boston or Quebec.<sup>742</sup> Only one company, the Allan Line put into Galway and this was only once every two weeks. Three days after the establishment of the Tuke Fund, Tuke met with James Nugent and George Melly the owner of the Beaver Line shipping company in Liverpool.<sup>743</sup>

In April 1882 Tuke launched his scheme in the Clifden union and within one week as indicated by Figure 1, a total of 222 families or 1,276 people applied to be included in the scheme. Tuke spent seven weeks in the west of Ireland and found thousands of people who were most anxious to emigrate from the districts of Galway, Oughterard, Clifden, Newport and Belmullet.<sup>744</sup> This was also the case at Roundstone, Cashel, Carna, Letterfrack and Renvyle.<sup>745</sup>

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<sup>740</sup> Emigration from Ireland: Second Report of the Committee of Mr Tuke's Fund, 'Reports and Papers Relating to the Proceedings of the Committee of Mr Tuke's Fund for Assisting Emigration from Ireland during the year 1882, 1883 and 1884', p.11

<sup>741</sup> Fry, *James Hack Tuke*, p. 167

<sup>742</sup> Emigration from Ireland: Second Report of the Committee of Mr Tuke's Fund, 'Reports and Papers Relating to the Proceedings of the Committee of Mr Tuke's Fund for Assisting Emigration from Ireland during the year 1882, 1883 and 1884', p. 4

<sup>743</sup> James Hack Tuke, 'With The Emigrants' *The Nineteenth Century*, Vol. XII (July, 1882), p. 137

<sup>744</sup> James Hack Tuke, Report on Emigration from Ireland: Being the Report of Mr Tuke's Fund Together With Statements By Mr Tuke and Major Gaskell, 'Reports and Papers Relating to the Proceedings of the Committee of Mr Tuke's Fund for Assisting Emigration from Ireland during the year 1882, 1883 and 1884', pp 5, 11

<sup>745</sup> James Hack Tuke, Report on Emigration from Ireland: Being the Report of Mr Tuke's Fund Together With Statements By Mr Tuke and Major Gaskell, 'Reports and Papers Relating to the Proceedings of the Committee of Mr Tuke's Fund for Assisting Emigration from Ireland during the year 1882, 1883 and 1884', pp 9, 10

Fig 1: Emigrants requesting to leave April 1882<sup>746</sup>

District	No. of families	No. of persons
Town and parish of Clifden	68	300
Errismore, sea-shore district	66	443
Roundstone (many evicted persons)	56	350
Renvyle and Letterfrack	32	183
Total	222	1,276

According to Tuke when he arrived unannounced at Mulranny in the Newport union in April 1882 he was taken aback to find more than 300 people from Mulranny and Achill waiting for him to sign up to leave.<sup>747</sup> The Tuke Committee had determined at the outset to assist those who could be reasonably supported by local or private sources. The Clifden Board of Guardians committed to provide the committee with £5,000 and an additional £2,000 to be borrowed by the Union. However, the Guardians rescinded on their offer of the additional £2,000 which ultimately meant 250 families were excluded from the scheme in the Clifden union.<sup>748</sup> The Union considered the cost associated with immigration to be merely transport cost. According to Tuke, for the Union, ‘emigration simply meant the largest number at the smallest cost’.<sup>749</sup> For the Tuke Committee immigration meant something ‘more than landing emigrants without friends or funds to proceed to proper fields of labour’.<sup>750</sup>

Families emigrating from the Clifden Union were required to arrive in Galway the night before the journey and many of them travelled by common cart 50 miles and more. Tuke requisitioned long and short cars, omnibuses and carts with local volunteers taking care of the arrangements and providing rest stops and food along the way with great consideration being given to the younger passengers. When the emigrants arrived in Galway lodging and food was provided.<sup>751</sup>

<sup>746</sup> James Hack Tuke, ‘With The Emigrants’, *The Nineteenth Century*, Vol. XII (July, 1882), p.148

<sup>747</sup> Letter from James Hack Tuke to John Sweetman, 18 April 1882, from the Sweetman Family Papers, N.L.I., Collection List No. 156, MS 47, 597/4

<sup>748</sup> James Hack Tuke, Mr Tuke’s Report, Emigration from Ireland: ‘Reports and Papers Relating to the Proceedings of the Committee of Mr Tuke’s Fund for Assisting Emigration from Ireland during the year 1882, 1883 and 1884’, p. 6; ‘With The Emigrants’, *The Nineteenth Century*, p.154

<sup>749</sup> James Hack Tuke, ‘With The Emigrants’, *The Nineteenth Century*, pp 148-9

<sup>750</sup> Ibid.

<sup>751</sup> James Hack Tuke, ‘With The Emigrants’, *The Nineteenth Century*, p. 149

## Challenges Faced by the Tuke Committee

The night before the immigrants left was an arduous night for Tuke and his colleagues. Lists had to be prepared as changes always occurred, some deciding not to leave and others taking their place. Other lists, such as for those travelling to Philadelphia were prepared for the volunteers who had to meet the emigrants on their arrival. Tuke had to contend with the many frustrations involved in the departure of over three hundred people at the Galway quay and noted that no effort was made on the part of the constabulary to assist in keeping order. Onlookers, friends and huge numbers of beggars made the departure all the more difficult.<sup>752</sup>

On 28 April 1881, 201 people left on board the *Austrian*; this was followed by the *Nepigon* on the 14 May with a further 345 poor Connemara emigrants. The emigrants departed in excellent spirits with no sign of the traditional ‘wail’ taking place. When leaving the ship Tuke was showered with a multitude of hand-shakings and blessings to the sound of three cheers. The absence of sorrow resulted not solely from the fact that families were not being separated but also from the fact that the emigrants wanted to leave.<sup>753</sup>

Not only was Nugent’s system improved and applied by Tuke but also those who had volunteered to assist Nugent further supported Tuke’s efforts. The emigrants on board the *Nepigon* were so poorly clothed that Father Stephens took a tug back to Galway and returned with three bundles of clothes which were distributed at the end of the journey. Father Stephens of Aughagower had assisted Nugent in 1880. Two weeks later the *Winnipeg* took 430 cheering people on their first step to the new world. According to Tuke it was through the kindness of James Nugent that Rev. J. O’Donnell, chaplain of the Liverpool workhouse, took charge of the immigrants on board ship.<sup>754</sup> In total 1,267 people were assisted to emigrate from April to May of 1882 with 289 additional people sent out by various other shipments.<sup>755</sup>

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<sup>752</sup> James Hack Tuke, ‘With The Emigrants’, *The Nineteenth Century*, p. 150

<sup>753</sup> James Hack Tuke, ‘With The Emigrants’, *The Nineteenth Century*, pp 157, 152

<sup>754</sup> James Hack Tuke, Mr Tuke’s Report, Emigration from Ireland: ‘Reports and Papers Relating to the Proceedings of the Committee of Mr Tuke’s Fund for Assisting Emigration from Ireland during the year 1882, 1883 and 1884’, pp 13-16; ‘With The Emigrants’, *The Nineteenth Century*, p. 156

<sup>755</sup> James Hack Tuke, Mr Tuke’s Report, Emigration from Ireland: ‘Reports and Papers Relating to the Proceedings of the Committee of Mr Tuke’s Fund for Assisting Emigration from Ireland during the year 1882, 1883 and 1884’, pp 20-21



Tuke estimated that 100,000 people needed to leave the west over a five year period and the cost would have been considerable at £700,000. The notion that emigrants would contribute to their fares was unrealistic as most families were in debt to shopkeepers and landlords.<sup>756</sup> According to Sydney Buxton the first year's work was carried out successfully by Tuke's 'wonderful power of organisation, to the zeal with which he inspired all those who worked with him, and to his warm-hearted desire to bring succour to the poor people whose miseries he felt so keenly'.<sup>757</sup> Tuke was constantly updating the workings of the schemes: in 1882 he advised against sending large number of families preferring instead to send at most 15 families creating the optimum opportunities for employment while at the same time not affecting change to local wage rates.

In July 1882 as a result of the committee's work the government decided that assisted emigration was one solution to the chronic poverty in Ireland. The 1882 Arrears of Rent Act provided £100,000 for state-aided emigration. Tuke was requested to administer the emigration schemes in Clifden, Oughterard, Newport and Belmullet, districts/Poor Law Unions with a combined population of 46,000 people. The government provided £5 towards each emigrant and the committee met the shortfall.<sup>758</sup> The closing date for applications for assistance was the 31 January 1883. Of the four unions under Tuke's supervision 6,420 people applied. Families applied in great numbers: 2,420 or 15 per cent of a population of 15,700 from Belmullet; 740 or 8 per cent of a total population of 8,900 from Newport West, 1,700 or 12 per cent of a total population of 14,000 from parts of Clifden and 1,560 or 21 per cent of a total population of 7,300 from Oughterard. The unions of Clifden and Oughterard covered almost all of Connemara. Selection from the lists was undertaken by Tuke, Sydney Buxton and Major Gaskell, the districts being too large for one individual to cover. Buxton managed the Northern portion of Mayo with the assistance of Captain Rutledge-Fair, Major Gaskell managed the Oughterard Union while Tuke supervised Clifden.<sup>759</sup>

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<sup>756</sup> James Hack Tuke, Memorandum Accompanying Memorial to the Government for Aid for Assisting Emigration, 'Reports and Papers Relating to the Proceedings of the Committee of Mr Tuke's Fund for Assisting Emigration from Ireland during the year 1882, 1883 and 1884', p.5 Fry, *James Hack Tuke*, p.187

<sup>757</sup> Buxton, Sydney, 'Mr Tuke and His Work', *The Contemporary Review*, (London, 1896), p. 866

<sup>758</sup> *The Times*, 21 December 1882.

<sup>759</sup> Emigration from Ireland: being the Report of the Committee of Mr Tuke's Fund (London, 1883), 'Reports and Papers Relating to the Proceedings of the Committee of Mr Tuke's Fund for Assisting Emigration from Ireland during the year 1882, 1883 and 1884', pp 7-8

The Tuke Committee, with the aid of government grants, was able to greatly increase the number of people seeking assistance to leave in 1883. Tuke tried to persuade people to settle in Canada as greater assistance was provided upon arrival as opposed to the United States. All those embarking at Quebec were met by government agents who travelled with them on trains to their final destination.<sup>760</sup> Further in Manitoba, railway work was available and domestic servants were required with wages from \$12 to \$25 a month.<sup>761</sup> British politicians also favoured Canada over the U.S. which seemed to promote nationalistic views among the Irish there.

Tuke ensured that emigrants arrived in Canada before the arrival of an unfamiliar harsh winter. Most left Ireland in June giving them time for adjustment before the winter arrived. Irish immigrants settled in 14 regions in Canada. From the outset the American authorities stated they would not accept Irish paupers and would only accept people if they already had existing family in the U.S. who could care for them. Sydney Buxton insisted upon letters and indeed contributions for those claiming to have family in the U.S. Buxton was not attempting to fundraise; rather monies sent from America were an indication of the welcome the emigrant would receive in America.<sup>762</sup>

Assisted emigration under the 1882 act ended in June 1883 but demand continued and in July 1883 the Tuke Committee appealed to the government for further funding. By a new clause in the Tramways and Public Companies (Ireland) Bill, a further £100,000 was granted for emigration purposes but only £50,000 subsequently went to fund the schemes with the remaining £50,000 demanded by the Irish Parliamentary Party to support internal migration in Ireland.<sup>763</sup> A system of voluntary transfer of some of the population to reclaimable waste or semi-waste lands within Ireland had been recommended by the Richmond Commission in 1881 and it was to such recommendations that members of the IPP looked to when opposing

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<sup>760</sup> Tuke, James H., 'Irish Emigration' *Nineteenth Century*, (London 1889) p. 363

<sup>761</sup> Tuke, James H., 'Irish Emigration' *Nineteenth Century*, p. 361

<sup>762</sup> Buxton, Sydney, *Emigration from Ireland*, Second Report of the Committee of Mr Tuke's Fund, (London, 1882), 'Reports and Papers Relating to the Proceedings of the Committee of Mr Tuke's Fund for Assisting Emigration from Ireland during the year 1882, 1883 and 1884', p.19

<sup>763</sup> Note: Parliament's Response to Tuke Committee's Request for Further Funding, Memorial to Mr Gladstone, (London 1883), 'Reports and Papers Relating to the Proceedings of the Committee of Mr Tuke's Fund for Assisting Emigration from Ireland during the year 1882, 1883 and 1884', p.145

assisted emigration.<sup>764</sup> Charles Stewart Parnell as leader of the Irish Parliamentary Party and the Irish National League established the Migration Company and became Chairman of the company.

At the national banquet to Mr Parnell in Dublin in December 1883, Parnell denounced the Tuke schemes stating ‘three-fourths of the emigrants who have been sent out from Ireland ... have been compelled to find their homes in the miserable garrets of New York, Boston and Montreal’. Opposed to emigration it was not surprising Parnell failed to differentiate between Tuke immigrants and others. Parnell described the Tuke Committee as ‘emigrationists’ and ‘coercionists’, and their efforts as ‘an indecent attempt to assist the Government to get rid of the Irish difficulty by getting rid of the Irish people’.<sup>765</sup>

The Migration Company was backed by the Catholic hierarchy and the aims of the company were to relieve the congestion which existed in some districts of Ireland and secondly to create a class of occupying small proprietors.<sup>766</sup> The Migration Company purchased the Kilclooney estate in Galway in the autumn of 1883; the nominal capital of the company was £250,000 with £4,000 to £5,000 raised by the sale of shares in the company. The Land Commission provided a loan of £43,000 which paid for the estate in the Landed Estates Court. The rents for the property purchased by the Migration Company did not yield enough to pay the annual instalments to the Treasury and ultimately a receiver was appointed to manage the estate.<sup>767</sup>

Parnell in response to questions raised by the Select Committee for Colonisation in 1890 stated the Migration Company was unsuccessful due to a lack of subscriptions which stopped following a public letter from Michael Davitt who opposed the scheme. Baldwin Leighton of the Migration Company placed the failure of the migration scheme on the opposition of the local people on the Kilclooney Estate to new tenants being introduced.<sup>768</sup> Parnell stated he had not heard unfavourable reports of the Tuke Committee from members

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<sup>764</sup> *Parliamentary Report From Her Majesty's Commissioners On Agriculture* (Richmond Commission), HC 1881 (2778), XV, p.24

<sup>765</sup> *The Times*, 12 December 1883, p.11

<sup>766</sup> *Report from the Select Committee on Colonisation; Together with the Proceedings of the Committee, Minutes of Evidence, and Appendix*, HC 1890 (354), pp 280-1, 345, qq 4591, 5544

<sup>767</sup> *Report from the Select Committee on colonisation; Together with the Proceedings of the Committee, Minutes of Evidence, and Appendix*, HC 1890 (354), In reference to labour costs: pp 347-8, qq 5585-97; In reference to fishing industry, p. 348, qq 5604-14.

<sup>768</sup> *Report from the Select Committee on colonisation; Together with the Proceedings of the Committee, Minutes of Evidence, and Appendix*, HC 1890 (354), p. 339, q. 5469

of the Catholic Church but he was in general agreement with the Church that emigration from Ireland had caused dissatisfaction amongst the Irish in Ireland and abroad.<sup>769</sup>

There were many reasons why the Migration Company failed; the fact each holding of 20 acres cost £400 while the cost of settling a family in Canada was less than £220 was a powerful argument against it.<sup>770</sup> Tuke described Parnell's migration scheme as the last 'will-o'-the-wisp' offered for relief and could not, 'from its costliness, touch one in the hundred of these poor families'. Tuke stated if carried out the internal migration effort would 'create in other quarters of Ireland fresh centres of beggary'.<sup>771</sup> Unfortunately, and to the detriment of those unable to avail of assisted passage, by 1889 the funding diverted from emigration to migration remained unspent. Remarkably it would seem that people were not willing to move to another area within Ireland and preferred instead to leave for North America. Emigrating to America was seen as a more local move than migrating to another part of Ireland as in America emigrants had greater access to the community they originated from.<sup>772</sup>

### **1883 – A Successful Year for the Tuke Committee**

With funding secured in 1883 the Tuke Committee continued to support families to emigrate. In May 1883 the Canadian Pacific Railway company unveiled plans to bring over 50,000 Irish to the Northwest Territory and to give each family 100 acres of land. The immigrants would receive free implements, horses, cattle, food and all the necessities required for starting life in Canada. After three years the emigrant would repay the company \$550.<sup>773</sup> The work of the Tuke Committee continued in Clifden, Oughterard, Newport and Belmullet and was extended into Swinford, part of the Galway union, and Arranmore Island off Donegal. Once more James Nugent showed his commitment to the poorest of the west. Howard Hodgkin described how it was James Nugent who appealed to the Tuke Committee to assist people from Arranmore Island to Beaver Island on Lake Michigan where immigrants

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<sup>769</sup> *Report from the Select Committee on colonisation; Together with the Proceedings of the Committee, Minutes of Evidence, and Appendix*, HC 1890 (354), p. 350 q. 5650.

<sup>770</sup> *Report from the Select Committee on colonisation; Together with the Proceedings of the Committee, Minutes of Evidence, and Appendix*, HC 1890 (354), p. 346, qq 5565-66

<sup>771</sup> Mr Tuke's Fund, Memorandum by Mr Tuke, May 1884, 'Reports and papers Relating to the Proceedings of Mr Tuke's Fund for Assisted Emigration from Ireland, during the years 1882, 1883 and 1884', p.6

<sup>772</sup> *Report from the Select Committee on Colonization; together with the Proceedings of the Committee, Minutes of Evidence, and Appendix*. HC 1889 (274), p. 113, qq 2157, 2184

<sup>773</sup> Moran Gerard, 'James Hack Tuke and Assisted Emigration from Galway and Mayo in the 1880s', p. 82

who had previously left Arranmore Island had offered land to new immigrants. The committee kindly responded and those who wished to leave were assisted.<sup>774</sup>

In 1883, in recognition of the efforts of the Tuke scheme, funding for assisted immigration was increased by the government: the committee received £8 per person instead of £5. In a letter to the editor of *The Times* in June 1883, Tuke stated that more than 800 families had emigrated, a total of 4,800 people. Once more Tuke reiterated the cheer with which the emigrants left. Captain Browne of the steamship *Phoenician* confirmed this, ‘every time I spoke to them they were very pleased and grateful to those gentlemen who had assisted them in leaving their old homesteads’, noting that his passengers were deserving of full credit for their behaviour on board.<sup>775</sup> Tuke was satisfied that the ‘violent opposition’ of the American newspapers which threatened the schemes had abated by 1883.

In July the *Boston Advertiser* stated that of the five arrivals since April 1883 none had become a burden to the state. The rigorous examinations which the emigrants had to face upon arrival in the U.S. were outlined by the *Advertiser*: the members of one family bound for Montana were held to one side to face further questioning after their initial inspection by U.S. authorities who raised concerns regarding the ages of the children. The parents of the family were both 37 years old and the children were aged 15, 13, 11, 9, 7, 5 and 1. The chief magistrate felt they may become an immediate burden on the state but when it was discovered they had their tickets to their final destination in Connecticut, a sum of money to support them and employment for all members of the family old enough to work with the Grosvenordale Mill Corporation the family was waved on.<sup>776</sup> *The Advertiser* further noted that each passenger had paid half a dollar in ‘head-money’, funds kept by the Treasurer of the U.S. to offset any liability should the passengers become the subjects of public charity.<sup>777</sup>

The records of the Tuke Committee indicated where the emigrants settled in the U.S.: the Eastern and Northern states included Vermont, Maine, New Hampshire, Connecticut,

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<sup>774</sup> Report by Mr Hodgkin, Emigration from Ireland, ‘Reports and Papers Relating to the Proceedings of Mr Tuke’s Fund for Assisting Emigration from Ireland, during the years 1882, 1883 and 1884, p. 21

<sup>775</sup> James Hack Tuke, Letter to the Editor of *The Times 11 June 1883*, Irish Emigration- Tuke Fund, ‘Reports and Papers Relating to the Proceedings of Mr Tuke’s Fund for Assisting Emigration from Ireland, during the years 1882, 1883 and 1884, p.3

<sup>776</sup> Fry, Edward, *James Hack Tuke*, p.191

<sup>777</sup> James Hack Tuke, Letter to the Editor of *The Times 11 June 1883*, Irish Emigration- Tuke Fund, ‘Reports and Papers Relating to the Proceedings of Mr Tuke’s Fund for Assisting Emigration from Ireland, during the years 1882, 1883 and 1884, p.4

Massachusetts, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Kentucky, Virginia, Delaware and Tennessee; The Mid-Western states included Ohio, Indiana, Wisconsin, Illinois, Iowa and Minnesota. Buxton and Rutledge-Fair sent Mayo emigrants to eighty different destinations in seventeen states along with a large number to the West and Winnipeg in Canada.<sup>778</sup>

James Nugent and John Ireland continued to support the efforts at assisted immigration. Graceville and St. Paul were identified as a number of the locations where the immigrants settled in Minnesota. In August 1883 Ireland wrote to the committee stating the Tuke's immigrants in Minnesota without exception were doing well. He further wrote in the Spring of 1884 that he was ready for 'fresh instalments' as Reverend James Tudley of Lincoln Illinois was prepared to take charge of ten or fifteen families. According to Ireland a few poor selections on behalf of the Government Emigrant Agencies had brought criticisms upon those assisted to America but John Ireland contended, 'I have always – and happily with good effect – asserted that the "Tuke Emigrants" were in all cases selected with care, and are by their industry and physical strength of great value to our country'.<sup>779</sup> Bishop Ireland continued to support the emigration efforts of the Tuke Committee many years after the large transfers of 1883. Major Rutledge-Fair further stated in a parliamentary report on colonisation in 1889 that Bishop Ireland was 'always willing to receive families from Mr Tuke's committee, and to help them and assist them in every way'.<sup>780</sup>

The letters sent by emigrants and Canadian officials in 1883 further indicated a great majority of those that had left had found employment and were adjusting well to their new surroundings. Every letter indicated opportunities were available for those who wished to work; 'wages are big here, this is a fine country'. Many letters indicated the dangers of alcohol consumption: 'this is a good place for anyone, one that will keep from the drink', wrote one immigrant while another immigrant wrote that he 'takes no drink'. Letters were

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<sup>778</sup> Emigration from Ireland: Second Report of the committee for Mr Tuke's Fund (London, 1883), 'Reports and Papers Relating to the Proceedings of Mr Tuke's Fund for Assisting Emigration from Ireland, during the years 1882, 1883 and 1884', pp 6, 16; Buxton, Sydney, Emigration from Ireland: Second Report No. 2 of the Committee for Mr. Tukes Fund, 'Reports and Papers Relating to the Proceedings of Mr Tuke's Fund for Assisting Emigration from Ireland, during the years 1882, 1883 and 1884', p. 24. See appendix for details of departure ports and the locations the immigrants settled in.

<sup>779</sup> Letter from Bishop Ireland, (August, 1883), 'Reports and Papers Relating to the Proceedings of Mr Tuke's Fund for Assisting Emigration from Ireland, during the years 1882, 1883 and 1884', p.159

<sup>780</sup> *Report from the Select Committee on Colonization; Together with the Proceedings of the Committee, Minutes of Evidence, and Appendix.* HC 1889 (274), p. 114, q. 2166

also sent to encourage others to leave, ‘how happy I will be when you come out here’ while another stated, ‘thank God we left poverty and I wish ye did the same.... Don’t bleve storys as they say at home’. A Canadian official stated in one correspondence, ‘Irish immigrants who have come to this country, and who have been able and willing to work, have been immediately placed; and I am happy to tell you that I think the great bulk of them are doing well’.<sup>781</sup>

## **The Decline of the Tuke Assisted Immigration Schemes**

The Tuke Committee continued with the work of emigration in 1884. In February Tuke visited Swinford where 91 families expressed an interest in emigrating. Three weeks later only one third of the families had been selected and according to Tuke ‘it was evident that much pressure or influence had been exerted to induce the families to remain at home’.<sup>782</sup> Although families were still looking to emigrate from Clifden Union in early 1884 it was clear the number had greatly reduced in this district too. By 1884, about 3,000 people had left out of a population of 25,000 over the previous two years which meant those most desperate to leave had already gone. Along with this a good potato crop had placed food on the tables of the poorest and letters remitting monies to the districts from those who had emigrated assisted in improving the local economy. Tuke estimated that £2,500 was remitted to the Oughterard Union from emigrants who had left in the previous two years. Many rents and shop debts were paid by way of ‘American money’.<sup>783</sup>

In March 1884 a larger number of families from Achill wanted to leave having not availed of the schemes in the same numbers as those from Newport and Belmullet. Sydney Buxton reported from Belmullet and Newport that although the numbers had declined from this district a further 1,000 were prepared to emigrate. The conditions in Belmullet had greatly improved too and the numbers of those dependent upon the workhouse and outdoor relief had reduced by 50 per cent. Wages were higher, holdings had been consolidated and

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<sup>781</sup> Mr Tuke’s Fund, Letters from Canada and the United States (1883), ‘Reports and Papers Relating to the Proceedings of Mr Tuke’s Fund for Assisting Emigration from Ireland, during the years 1882, 1883 and 1884, pp 5-13. See appendix for immigrant letters.

<sup>782</sup> James Hack Tuke, Mr Tuke’s Report (March 1884) ‘Reports and Papers Relating to the Proceedings of Mr Tuke’s Fund for Assisting Emigration from Ireland, during the years 1882, 1883 and 1884, p.187

<sup>783</sup> Ibid., p.189

considerable sums from remittance monies had flowed in from abroad. With such improvements and a diminished population the desire to leave has lessened. Along with this, there was opposition to emigration from the Irish National League and the Catholic Church.

In July 1883 the Catholics bishops issued a resolution against emigration in which they declared state-aided emigration as a means of ending congestion was ‘unwise and impolitic, and tends only to promote disaffection amongst the Irish race at home and abroad’.<sup>784</sup> In November 1883 twenty-five clerics of the Tuam deanery led by Archbishop John McEvilly stated all subsidised emigration should be opposed by every local and constitutional method available.<sup>785</sup> A number of clergy of the Tuam Archdiocese took a more pragmatic approach including Patrick Lavelle of Cong and John Stephens of Aughagower.<sup>786</sup> Stephens, as we have seen, was involved with the schemes and assisted with the transportation of emigrants to the ports of departure. Most priests did assist in the first year of the schemes but when they found a large number of families were leaving they became concerned. In 1881 a priest in Clifden wrote: ‘I say with all the energy of my existence, let the people leave in any and every way which may take them out of the slough of the poverty and misery in which they are at present sunk’. By 1884 the same priest was completely opposed to emigration.<sup>787</sup> Bishop McCormack of Achonry in a pre-Easter sermon in Swinford in 1884 further denounced the schemes and all involved, stating that members of the Tuke Committee came ‘with larger gifts than before’. ‘They are now, forsooth, prepared to spare the ratepayers. Not a penny shall they demand for the deportation’.<sup>788</sup>

The opposition of the church greatly affected the emigration schemes. The members of the Tuke Committee were not from the local districts and in effect were outsiders who were also identified with the British government: the same government which denied tenants land rights. The loss of the support of the local clergy was a significant factor in the committee’s decision to suspend operations. The Catholic Church was not the only supporter of the schemes which changed its attitude.

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<sup>784</sup> Fry, *James Hack Tuke*, p.197

<sup>785</sup> *Connaught Telegraph*, 10 November 1883, p.3; *Galway Vindicator*, 10 November 1883, p.3

<sup>786</sup> Moran Gerard, ‘Mayo God Help Us! Emigration from Nineteenth-Century Mayo’ *Cathair na Mart, Journal of the Westport Historical Society*, 21, p.125

<sup>787</sup> *Report from the Select Committee on Colonisation; Together with the Proceedings of the Committee, Minutes of Evidence, and Appendix*, HC 1890 (354), pp 202, 210 qq 3420, 3507

<sup>788</sup> Report of Mr Sydney Buxton (1884), ‘Reports and Papers Relating to the Proceedings of Mr Tuke’s Fund for Assisting Emigration from Ireland, during the years 1882, 1883 and 1884’, p.3



In 1884 the U.S. and Canadian Governments attitude became less sympathetic to the schemes. Difficulties arose in rural Canada in 1884 with the downturn in agricultural activity due to increased mechanising of agriculture. The exceptionally severe winter of 1883-4 left many immigrants dependent upon the Canadian authorities with public opinion mounting against them. Irish newspapers and other nationalistic sources opposed to emigration relayed stories of impoverished Irish, without making any distinction between those assisted by Tuke and those who availed of other government-assisted programmes. The Canadian government also made no distinction. Allegations made by Archbishop Lynch in Toronto in *The Nation* were investigated by Mr Hodgkins and Captain Rutledge-Fair who did find a number of families in Toronto in destitution but none of these families had been assisted by the Tuke Committee. Moran regarded the immigration schemes to Canada as a missed opportunity to establish emigration on a more permanent basis. The Tuke schemes with the assistance of Poor Law Unions were a mistake which ‘undermined the whole assisted emigration concept’, as the Canadian authorities were too willing to accept unsuitable emigrants who were unable to adapt to new farming techniques.<sup>789</sup>

Despite Tuke’s best efforts to run the schemes efficiently there were criticisms. As all expenses were covered by Tuke it was said that those who could afford their own passage were taking advantage of the scheme and this ultimately prevented those in greater need from availing of the scheme. As Tuke only assisted families, the great numbers of single men and women who found themselves ineligible for the schemes became resentful. The Tuke schemes were further hampered by the Irish Parliamentary Party and the National League under Parnell who regarded assisted emigration as unpatriotic. As members of the National League began to dominate Board of Guardians, support for emigration schemes diminished. The decline of emigration schemes came about with good harvests in 1883. Although individually the strains placed upon the committee were managed, collectively the poor publicity along with the Canadian authorities withdrawing their support in 1884 left Tuke only one option. On 13 June 1884 the Tuke Committee suspended its operations. The committee still had £20,000 of unused funds available for emigration purposes. The members of the committee felt that much had been achieved and for that reason it was decided the

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<sup>789</sup> Moran, G. ‘State Aided Emigration from Ireland to Canada in the 1880s’, pp 14-15

committee would remain in existence and reactivate its services if required. Between 1884 and 1891 Tuke privately assisted between 60 and 120 people to emigrate annually from Clifden and Belmullet.<sup>790</sup>

Overall, from 1882 to 1884 the Tuke Committee assisted 9,482 people to leave: 1,300 in 1882, 5,380 in 1883 and 2,802 in 1884. A total of 20 per cent of the population of the Belmullet Union and 22 per cent of the population of Clifden Union left in this period at a cost of £69,614 of which the government provided £44,438.<sup>791</sup> Tuke never did reactivate his emigration scheme to the level of the early 1880s. The distress of 1886 saw the government put all its resources into a seed-potato supply scheme administered by Tuke. This change in emphasis can also be attributed to the growing strength of the Irish Parliamentary Party which remained completely opposed to any form of alleviating the condition of the Irish poor by emigration schemes.

The condition of the Tuke Committee immigrants was monitored up to the end of the 1880s. In 1883-4 Howard Hodgkins visited 125 families in fifteen locations in North America. Other families were visited by Major Fox, R.M. Christy and Fr Martin Mahony. In 1887 Christy was hired by the Tuke Fund to inquire into the condition of the immigrants and reported to the committee that the only pity was that many more had not emigrated. He further stated that Bishop Ireland and two priests in St. Paul and surrounding parishes were satisfied that all families with the exception of one were doing well and that at least six families were wealthy and were worth from \$3,000 to \$7,000. Tuke in responding to the select committee on colonisation in 1890 quoted from Mr Christy whom he described as a man he could rely upon: 'you will hardly believe that one man, one of the Connemaras, has speculated so wisely in city real estate, that he is now probably worth 50,000 dollars, while his daughters dress and go about like duchesses'.<sup>792</sup> The man in question had arrived in Minnesota in 1883. Further accounts were provided by those that had stayed with the immigrants. Father Mahony, a Catholic curate at Preston, Lancashire who had departed with a large group of emigrants in 1883, remained a priest in St. Paul under Bishop Ireland. In

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<sup>790</sup> Moran, G. 'James Hack Tuke and Assisted Emigration from Galway and Mayo in the 1880s', p. 89

<sup>791</sup> Mr Tuke's Fund, Statement of Account for the year 1884, 'Reports and Papers Relating to the Proceedings of Mr Tuke's Fund for Assisting Emigration from Ireland, during the years 1882, 1883 and 1884'; Buxton, Sydney, 'Mr Tuke and His Work', *The Contemporary Review*, Vol. 69, (London, 1896) p. 874

<sup>792</sup> *Report from the Select Committee on Colonisation; Together with the Proceedings of the Committee, Minutes of Evidence, and Appendix*, HC 1890 (354), p. 201 q. 3415

1888 he reported the immigrants had been lifted to a new life and had benefited in every way. Father Mahony further stated his findings were backed by Bishop Ireland who felt the emigrants had become a most valuable and important addition to the community.<sup>793</sup> According to Mahony the emigrants improved in every way after a number of years in Minnesota and any wish to see old Ireland again was only as an American tourist.<sup>794</sup>

In 1889 Tuke published a number of letters highlighting the success of the immigrants who lived in or around St. Paul, Minnesota. It would appear many difficulties including language were being overcome: 'the young people's rather surprising backwardness in English at the start has been disappearing before the influence of the night-schools and other means of education. They are remarkably temperate and even 'teetotal'. And this is everything'.<sup>795</sup> According to Moran, the letters Tuke published were written, 'no doubt from a propaganda point of view'.<sup>796</sup> Tessa English states the letters were carefully selected 'by the very officials and philanthropists who had a vested interest in reporting the success of the scheme'.<sup>797</sup> To describe the letters as propaganda seems to assume propaganda was required but this was hardly the case as no record existed that any of the Tuke emigrants became a charge on the U.S. or Canadian authorities. Furthermore groups who were content to discredit assisted immigration, including Parnell and Irish nationalists, found it difficult to fault the work of Tuke and while the Catholic Church opposed emigration no personal attacks were directed at Tuke or other members of the Tuke Committee. In publishing the letters which were a part of a report from Mahony, Tuke continued his tradition of record keeping. It is clear that had the immigrants suffered or disapproved of the schemes the press would not have failed to highlight such suffering. When the weight of positive responses is placed against those who responded negatively it is difficult to argue the schemes were anything other than a success.

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<sup>793</sup> *Report from the Select Committee on Colonisation; Together with the Proceedings of the Committee, Minutes of Evidence, and Appendix*, HC 1890 (354), p.201 q.3415.

<sup>794</sup> Tuke James, H., 'News From Some Irish Emigrants' in *The Nineteenth Century*, vol., xxv, (London, 1889), p. 433

<sup>795</sup> Tuke James, H., 'News From Some Irish Emigrants' in *The Nineteenth Century*, vol., xxv, (London, 1889), p. 435. See appendix for immigrant letters published by Tuke in 1889.

<sup>796</sup> Moran Gerard, 'James Hack Tuke and Assisted Emigration from Galway and Mayo in the 1880s', p.90

<sup>797</sup> English Tessa, 'James Hack Tuke & Assisted Emigration from the West of Ireland in the 1880s', *In Search Of a Better Life British and Irish Migration* edited by Graham Davis, (The History Press, Gloucestershire, 2011), p.171

Their overall success notwithstanding, the schemes did have a number of shortcomings. Too much was attempted in too short a time and a more co-ordinated approach over a longer period may have brought about more positive and longer-term results. Such an approach, may have stifled the widespread opposition that ended the schemes in Ireland and Canada where the overall effect seriously diminished Canada's potential as a base for Irish immigrants.<sup>798</sup>

The Tuke Committee not only assisted families to settle within colonisation schemes similar to that of James Nugent, John Ireland and John Sweetman but also assisted families to immigrate to places where immediate work was obtained. The colonisation programmes of the early 1880s had shown that immigrants placed on settlements often left these locations for the larger towns and cities and the higher wages offered such places. One further difference between the Tuke schemes and earlier colonisation schemes was the fact the Tuke Committee required letters of encouragement without exception from emigrants wishing to travel to the U.S.<sup>799</sup>

Overall the Tuke schemes must be viewed as an achievement which was not only measured by the success of the immigrant families but also measured by the reduction in the number of people seeking relief. In 1882, the number of persons who received outdoor relief in the Clifden Union was 2,932. By 1883 these numbers had reduced to 1,367. As was to be expected the number declined further in 1884 as potato yields returned which also assisted in reducing the number of persons requiring relief. Similar declines were reported in Belmullet.<sup>800</sup> One of the most important achievements of the Tuke schemes was the fact that it put in place a supply of funding that was made available to those in need via remittances. From 1883 to 1884 it was estimated that £2,000 was received in the Clifden Union from those assisted by Tuke. By 1888 this had increased to £8,000.<sup>801</sup> Also in 1888, a further 500 people, mainly single persons left Clifden wholly or part funded by their friends and families

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<sup>798</sup> Moran, Gerard, 'State Aided Emigration from Ireland to Canada in the 1880s', p.15

<sup>799</sup> *Report from the Select Committee on Colonization; Together with the Proceedings of the Committee, Minutes of Evidence, and Appendix*, HC 1889 (274), p.113, q.2156

<sup>800</sup> *Report from the Select Committee on Colonisation; Together with the Proceedings of the Committee, Minutes of Evidence, and Appendix*, HC 1890 (354), pp 202, 203 qq 3422, 3423, 3424

<sup>801</sup> Fry, Edward, *James Hack Tuke: a Memoir* (London, 1899), p.215

who had emigrated earlier.<sup>802</sup> The Tuke Committee continued to fund people who requested to leave up to 1889 when 80 people left the Clifden Union; one half of those leaving had the tickets for the sea passage sent to them by their friends in America. In the same year 550 people applied to the Guardians of the Belmullet union to be assisted to leave with 40 fully paid passages paid for by friends in Montana. The cost of each ticket was £15 which was an indication of the prosperity of those who had left.<sup>803</sup> Tuke's scheme initiated a chain migration process with at least another 500 emigrating by the end of the decade. As late as June 1890 Tuke was still advocating emigration estimating that a further 100,000 people needed to leave and that this could be achieved by assisting 4,000 families or 20,000 people each year over a five-year period.<sup>804</sup>

## Conclusion

Although the Tuke Committee was successful in assisting families to leave Ireland the concept of assisting impoverished emigrants to leave England or Ireland cannot be attributed to any one single person or organisation. Annie Parlane Macpherson assisted families and children for a number of years starting in 1869, Louisa Birt assisted children to immigrate over a 25 year period which began in 1873. Further in 1873, Edward Richardson on behalf of the Queensland Government escorted 250 emigrants to Queensland. Advocates of impoverished children included John T. Middlemore who began relocating children to Canada in 1873 while Doctor Thomas John Barnardo assisted orphan children in the early 1880s.<sup>805</sup>

Further, in the 1880s, The East London Colonisation Society under the patronage of Lady Burdett-Coutts and Rev. Hugh Huleatt sent 19 families from Bethnal Green in London to Canada. Each family was provided with 160 acres of land and £100 which was to be repaid over a ten year period. Most had never been outside of London and few or none had

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<sup>802</sup> *Report from the Select Committee on Colonisation; Together with the Proceedings of the Committee, Minutes of Evidence, and Appendix*, HC 1890 (354), p.203 q.3427

<sup>803</sup> *Report from the Select Committee on Colonisation; Together with the Proceedings of the Committee, Minutes of Evidence, and Appendix*, HC 1890 (354), p.204 q.3430

<sup>804</sup> Moran Gerard, 'James Hack Tuke and his Schemes for Assisted Emigration from the West of Ireland', *History Ireland*, Vol. 21:3(2013); 'In Search of a Better Way of Life': Emigration from Connemara in the late Nineteenth Century. Paper delivered by Dr Gerard Moran lecturer in the Department of History, NUI Maynooth, at Uncovering Our Connemara Roots, a Genealogical Conference held in Clifden on 30 May – 1 June, 2012

<sup>805</sup> <http://jubilation.uwaterloo.ca/~marj/genealogy/children/Organizations>; Horn, Pamela, Agricultural Trade Unionism and Emigration, 1872-1881 in *The Historical Journal*, Vol. 15, No. 1 (Mar., 1972), p.92, Lefroy, J.H., The British Association in Canada: a paper read before the fellows of the Royal Colonial Institute, January 13, 1885, with the discussion ... *Foreign and Commonwealth Office Collection*, (1885) published by The University of Manchester, The John Rylands University Library.

agricultural or husbandry experience. Most families successfully assimilated but two or three families who ‘turned out bad’ returned to London.<sup>806</sup> Others such as Dr. Gilbert of the Experimental Farm, Rothampstead, visited Manitoba in 1881 and wrote there was ‘extraordinary promise of success for agriculturists’. Gilbert stated it was ‘useless for any person to emigrate unless he is prepared for hard work’, and that the ‘idle and shiftless will find no fortune readymade to their hands’. According to Gilbert, those who were ‘intemperate and unsteady’ in England would not benefit by being assisted to emigrate as ‘the mere change of scene and surroundings will not make them any better’.<sup>807</sup> In 1883 the Tuke Fund assisted 1,323 people to immigrate to Manitoba, Canada and in the same year Irish unions assisted 2,460 people to immigrate to the same location.<sup>808</sup>

The disadvantage of assisted colonization over assisted emigration was cost. Colonization per head was four times higher than that of simple emigration.<sup>809</sup> Mr. Arnold Henry White who had assisted emigrants from England to South Africa outlined to the select committee on colonization in 1890 the difference between colonization and emigration and stated it was not possible to combine the two systems. With assisted emigration all responsibility for those assisting ceased when the emigrants reached their destination. Much greater responsibility lay with those who assisted families in colonisation schemes and only began when the colonists reached their destination. Arrangements for housing, land, irrigation, crops, implements, seed and cattle; for spiritual, educational, medical and midwifery requirements had to be considered in every detail. The laws and regulations governing the settlement had to be framed in accordance with the laws of the colony in which the settlement is placed but the laws had to be simple in nature so as to ensure they were understood and observed by the new settlers. Regulations were required regarding intoxicants, the practice of vice and immorality, the repayment of capital and interest, the settlement of disputes, the impounding of cattle, trespass, the division and allotment of land, the destruction of noxious weeds, the repair of fences and gates, the employment of natives, the registration of property, sanitary rules, pasture and the due cultivation of lands, the

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<sup>806</sup> Lefroy, J.H., *The British Association in Canada: A paper read before the fellows of the Royal Colonial Institute*, January 13, 1885, with the discussion ... Foreign and Commonwealth Office Collection, (1885), p.32

<sup>807</sup> Lefroy, J.H., *The British Association in Canada: A paper read before the fellows of the Royal Colonial Institute*, January 13, 1885, with the discussion ... Foreign and Commonwealth Office Collection, (1885), pp 33-34

<sup>808</sup> Lefroy, J.H., *The British Association in Canada: A paper read before the fellows of the Royal Colonial Institute*, January 13, 1885, with the discussion ... Foreign and Commonwealth Office Collection, (1885), p.26

<sup>809</sup> Fry, p.157

supply of rations for maintenance of the community pending the maturity and sale of the first crops, the use of implements, such as carts, wagons, reapers, rollers or multiple-furrow ploughs. Those most suitable for colonisation were not those who could provide for themselves and not those who would become a burden to their host nation, the most suitable were described as ‘adventurous second-raters’ who had not succeeded in providing an assurance of a future at home or of warding off the workhouse in old age.<sup>810</sup>

In responding to the Select Committee in 1890, J.H. Tuke agreed with John Sweetman that in order for a colonist as opposed to an emigrant to be successful £100 of his own money was required.<sup>811</sup> By 1887, a great number of Tuke immigrants were in a comfortable position with six families considered wealthy having a worth of between \$3,000 and \$7,000. But even when the experiences of Nugent and Sweetman were applied by the Tuke Committee a number of Tuke immigrants failed.<sup>812</sup> By 1889, Tuke calculated that £10,000 was sent annually to the west of Ireland from immigrants assisted by Nugent and the Tuke Committee.<sup>813</sup> There was little difference in the result of both the Nugent and Sweetman schemes in that most of those assisted to emigrate left the settlements for the attractions of the larger cities.<sup>814</sup> Tuke was of the opinion that the optimum outcome for emigrants from the west of Ireland was to build homes in the rural regions of Mid-West America or Canada but only after some time was spent working and the land acquired at their own expense such had occurred with labourers in New York who had worked in the ironworks who had acquired land and had prospered.<sup>815</sup>

The efforts of men such as Nugent, Sweetman and Tuke were further replicated and adapted. Reverend Herbert V. Mills established the Home Colonisation Society to provide work in English industrial villages for the poorest. Mills who had resided in Liverpool up to 1887 was known as a radical campaigner for reform of the poor laws. In evidence to a Select

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<sup>810</sup> *Report from the Select Committee on colonisation; together with the proceedings of the committee, minutes of evidence, and appendix*, HC 1890 (354), p.168 q.2883

<sup>811</sup> *Report from the Select Committee on colonisation; together with the proceedings of the committee, minutes of evidence, and appendix*, HC 1890 (354), p.210 q. 3524

<sup>812</sup> *Report from the Select Committee on colonisation; together with the proceedings of the committee, minutes of evidence, and appendix*, HC 1890 (354), p.201 q. 3414

<sup>813</sup> *Report from the Select Committee on colonisation; together with the proceedings of the committee, minutes of evidence, and appendix*, HC 1890 (354), p.215 q.3611

<sup>814</sup> *Report from the Select Committee on colonisation; together with the proceedings of the committee, minutes of evidence, and appendix*, HC 1890 (354), p.201 q. 3409

<sup>815</sup> *Report from the Select Committee on colonisation; together with the proceedings of the committee, minutes of evidence, and appendix*, HC 1890 (354), p. 201 q. 3411

Committee on Poor Laws in 1888 Mills called on the government to set up a number of land colonies. Prior to the establishment of a small colony at Stranthwaite near Kendal in 1893 the Society wrote to Sweetman in September 1892 to inform him of the land acquired and to provide him a copy of Mills pamphlet, *Poverty and the State*. Shortly after this correspondence Mills wrote to Sweetman requesting £2,000 as the cost of establishing the colony was £4,000 but only £2,000 had been raised. In 1893 the Home Colonisation Society set up a small farm at Starthwaite near Kendal with 22 settlers who lived and worked on the estate.<sup>816</sup>

Finally, the greatest success of the Tuke Committee was that it highlighted the destitution and congestion of the poorest regions of the West of Ireland. No longer was the region overlooked as during the 1880s a number of prominent government officials visited the region.<sup>817</sup> In the 1890s when funding was provided by parliament to invest in infrastructure, agricultural practices and employment opportunities it was to James Hack Tuke the government looked. Tuke became Chairman of the Congested Districts Board which oversaw a great number of improvements for this impoverished region.

James Hack Tuke is recognised as the greatest advocate of assisted emigration from the west of Ireland to North America in nineteenth century emigration history, but in remembering the efforts of the Tuke Committee is it imperative that scholars acknowledge the efforts of the schemes that immediately preceded the work of Tuke. The Tuke Committee may have been the most successful advocate of emigration but this success was directly due to the lessons learned from the pioneering efforts of James Nugent along with the support of the people of Liverpool, the people of the west of Ireland and indeed the colonisation efforts of John Ireland and the Colonisation Bureau. The concept of transporting family groups from England and Ireland to North America had been tried and tested throughout the nineteenth century but the transfer of impoverished tenants from the west of Ireland to centres of employment in North America was implemented most successfully by the Tuke Committee. Without Nugent's efforts, the Tuke schemes may have ended sooner with fewer people availing of the opportunity to emigrate. In recognising the efforts to populate the Mid-West, the Colonisation Bureau is rightly given great credit while at the same time in recognising

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<sup>816</sup> *Report of the Present Condition of the East London Colonists*, 1886 from the Sweetman Family Papers, at the National Library of Ireland, Collection List No. 156, MS 47, 599/12

<sup>817</sup> Moran Gerard, 'James Hack Tuke and Assisted Emigration from Galway and Mayo in the 1880s', p.91



the efforts to alleviate the poorest of the west of Ireland the efforts of James Hack Tuke are also recognised. Sadly the emigration efforts of James Nugent have primarily been discussed in the context of the overall immigration/colonisation schemes which took place in Minnesota in 1880. Perhaps this study may serve to bring greater recognition and understanding of the importance of James Nugent's colonisation scheme.

## Chapter 6:

### Part 1: Nugent's immigrants after 1880

The lasting legacy of Nugent's immigrants must also include those who immigrated in the years immediately following 1880 under the guardianship of the Tuke Committee. As previously outlined, Nugent immigrants are of great importance to Irish and Irish-American history as they can be followed from their small isolated regions of Connemara to Minnesota and in some cases even further. What may be perceived as a short-term failure is surely the story of long-term success which was achieved by the descendants of Nugent's immigrants and of the 10,000 immigrants assisted by the Tuke Committee in the 1880s.

It has been stated that the families who left Graceville settled below Dayton's Bluff in what was called the 'Connemara Patch', in Swede Hollow and along the river flats of St. Paul and Minneapolis in an area called the Bohemian Flats.<sup>818</sup> Although numerous sources repeat this claim, a detailed examination has not provided sufficient information to confirm this contention. At the same time, no information exists to contradict this assumption either. It is only by studying the individual families and by isolating the locations where the families resided, that a definitive statement can be made as to whether the people of the 'Connemara Patch' were Nugent's immigrants. There can be no doubt that those who resided in the 'Connemara Patch' were from the far west of Ireland but it cannot be assumed that these people were the same individuals that left Graceville in early 1881. Further, the same analytical approach must be taken when considering what became of Nugent's immigrants after they had relocated to St Paul and in the generations that followed. As previously stated,

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<sup>818</sup> James Michael Reardon, *The Catholic Church in the Diocese of St. Paul*, p. 242 states the immigrants settled below Dayton's Bluff in St. Mary's parish. In 1881 St. Mary's church and the Cathedral of St. Paul were the only English speaking churches in Ramsey County and it may be assumed the immigrants attended service at St. Mary's. Other Catholic Churches in St. Paul included, the Church of the Assumption which served German parishioners, The Church of St. Louis served French parishioners and the Church of St. Stanislaus served Bohemian and Polish immigrants. Ann Regan, *Irish in Minnesota*, states Nugent's immigrants settled on river flats in St. Paul and Minneapolis and refers to an area called the Bohemian Flats as noted in the Works Projects Administration, Writers' Program, *The Bohemian Flats*, 13. (WPA) Minnesota WPA projects of the late 1930s and early 1940s produced a variety of published histories and manuscript materials, including information about church congregations, school districts, cemeteries, and other background research for county histories, some of which were never completed. This account is to be found at the Minnesota Historical Society but the authors are unknown as is the date of publication although it is thought to be circa 1941. This work indicates Connemara's arrived in the 1880s but does not indicate the immigrants were Nugent's immigrants and as such could be Tuke immigrants who also arrived in the 1880s. Further references such as Richard Berg, *The History of St. Michael's Parish of St. Paul* and Nels M. Hokanson, 'I remember St. Paul's Swede Hollow', in *Minnesota History*, 41: (Winter 1969) make no reference to Nugent's immigrants. Bridget Connelly states that she and Seosamh O Cúig were unable to locate the immigrants in *Forgetting Ireland*, p. 220

Nugent's immigrants were no longer considered in any great detail by the local or national press after the stories of winter hardship had abated. The lack of understanding of poverty had labelled Nugent's immigrants as cunning and shiftless and further described them as beggars. An examination of the families in the generations that followed will assist in understanding the immigrants more fully. This chapter will identify a number of families and their descendants who were assisted by Nugent and it is this evidence-based approach that will reveal their lives including where they resided in their early years of resettlement in St Paul. More interestingly, the family histories will also reveal how these families and individuals went forward or developed within a society that was, itself, developing and advancing. Comparing Nugent's immigrants with the Irish in America, it is of interest to note the parallels that existed.

This chapter is divided into two: Part 1 will provide an overview of the families. Detailed references for the family histories mentioned in part 1 of this chapter are provided in part 2 along with a comprehensive genealogical breakdown of the families who were discovered. Identifying individual families and their descendants is a time-consuming task. Genealogy is most often undertaken by a family member who not only has information of the family lineage but who has access to official and unofficial records. For the purpose of this study, 12 or one-third of the families were considered – some in more detail than others. The families were discovered by comparing contemporary accounts with the shipping list and official records. A number of name variations were also applied. Part 1 will survey the first and second generations addressing geographical, social, religious and ethnic mobility. The term first-generation may refer to either people who were born in one country and relocated to another, or to their children born in the country they have relocated to. In this instance first and second generation will refer to the children and grandchildren of those who headed the families assisted by Nugent. Over 40 years later, the descendants of Nugent's immigrants had acculturated and generally speaking were no longer considered Irish immigrants but Americans of Irish decent.

### **Religious and Social Identity**

The majority of Nugent's immigrants left Graceville in 1881 and relocated to St Paul. Although all the families would eventually leave over generations, in 1881 five families remained farming in Big Stone County. A number of families were selected for examination in greater detail. Tracing the genealogy of those who remained in Big Stone was less

challenging than finding those who left for St Paul. It was customary for farm land to be passed from one generation to another and this was typically completed via the male lineage, leaving the family name unchanged. Tracing the families of those who left for St Paul was a far greater challenge which required the knowledge acquired through this study along with applying multiple variations of the family name that was identified on the shipping list. Many false leads were found as many Irish families in the United States shared not only variations of surnames but of first names too.

John Gallagher and his family were one family who retained their land. Of the five children of John and Annie Gallagher, two sons migrated west to Washington and one moved to St Paul. Two more of their children, Anthony and Mary, remained in Graceville. Mary married Patrick Costello and all of the second generation Gallaghers/Costellos left Graceville with the exception of one who remained farming having inherited the family land. Some of the Gallagher/Costello progeny initially left Graceville to further their education while others left for economic or social reasons. The second generation of Gallagher/Costellos migrated to Chicago in Illinois, San Diego in California and International Falls and Keewatin in northern Minnesota. The second generation children of Anthony Gallagher left Graceville too and migrated to Silver Bow in Montana and Amarillo in Texas.

The reasons why people migrated from Graceville included the traditional push and pull factors especially employment opportunities. The expanding industrialised cities of Minnesota and other mid-west and western states attracted migrants. With the exception of two first generation immigrants, all of the descendants who left the state of Minnesota travelled west. Irish immigrants to eastern Washington filled traditional occupations including domestic service and mining. Some Irish farmed land while others achieved rapid financial and civic success. The expansion of the railway to Washington in 1887 provided mobility and opportunity for migrants. Economic opportunities were available by the transportation connections between Butte, Montana, and Spokane. Further transport along the Pacific Coast between San Francisco and Puget Sound allowed immigration from what were Irish population centres.<sup>819</sup>

Coleman Bourke and his family relocated to St Paul in 1881. His son Coleman junior migrated to Montana and married Nina F. Darby who had been born in Anaconda, Montana. The family later moved to Whatcom, Washington. Nina's mother was born in Minnesota but her parents had emigrated from England. First generation Patrick Bourke, brother of

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<sup>819</sup> [http://www.historylink.org/index.cfm?DisplayPage=output.cfm&File\\_Id=5348](http://www.historylink.org/index.cfm?DisplayPage=output.cfm&File_Id=5348)

Coleman, moved from St Paul to Silver Bow in Montana and married Irene Faustick from Detroit in Michigan. The son of Coleman Bourke junior, the second generation of Nugent's immigrants migrated from Washington to San Francisco. Other first generation immigrants left St Paul. Two of Martin King's daughters, Mary and Helen left St Paul for Montana. Helen married Robert Hicks who worked as a stage coach driver. Helen and Robert migrated from Montana to Idaho and after a number of years they relocated to Washington. John and Margaret Coyne's eldest daughter too migrated to Spokane Washington.

By leaving Graceville more employment opportunities were available for Nugent's immigrants and their children but for those who remained in Graceville, farming was the primary occupation. Anthony Gallagher inherited the land acquired by his father. His sister Mary and her husband purchased land in Leonardsville and also farmed. A second generation of Gallaghers remained on the land; John the youngest son of Mary Costello inherited his father's farm and continued working the land in 1940. John Gallagher and his son Anthony retained their links with the Catholic Church and John Ireland in Graceville as was indicated by their membership of the Ancient Order of Hibernians. John's son and daughter who remained in western Minnesota married immigrants. Anthony married a Scottish immigrant and his sister Mary married an Irish immigrant. Although Mary raised her children in a Catholic Irish-American household, her children did not find their spouses within their own ethnic group. Her daughter Vera married a man of French-Canadian descent and although his religious identity was unclear, French-Canadian pioneers in Minnesota were mainly Catholic. Vera's sister Anna married an immigrant from Italy. The second generation Costello daughters both married men of different ethnic backgrounds but continued to retain their Catholic identity. One more family who remained in Graceville was the Coyne family. Joseph Coyne, the youngest son of John Coyne remained on the farm in Big Stone. He married Mariah Cox an Irish immigrant from Longford. Another first generation Nugent immigrant, Julia Grealish, married a man of diverse heritage. Her husband Charles G. Gauthier was French Canadian and Native American of Ojibwa heritage. Other first generation Nugent immigrants married women of foreign birth; Stephen O'Brien's wife had been born in Norway while John Coyne married Bertha Kussrow whose parents had emigrated from Germany. Mary Flaherty a first generation married another first generation Irish man who had been born in New Jersey. Mary and her husband left Minnesota and migrated east to Pennsylvania. In this instance, an east coast man of Irish parents, relocated to Minnesota and married a mid-west Irish immigrant but then returned to the eastern states in search of employment in the mining industry.

Further examples of different ethnic marriages included second generation, Michael Thomas Flaherty who married a first generation German, Alice K. Scheel. Second generation Joseph Bourke married Marie Anderson whose parents had emigrated from Norway. His brother, Patrick Bourke left St Paul for Butte Montana and married Irene Faustick from Detroit Michigan. Second generation Mamie Gauthier moved from Washington to Montana but returned to Washington by 1920. Her husband George Taylor was born in Washington but his parents had been born in Kansas. What is clear from this assessment is the extent of diversity of marriages that took place between the Irish and other ethnic groups. Unlike the Irish of the east coast, the Irish of the mid-west and west did not remain rigid within an Irish enclave retaining Irish traits. Although a number of the first generation did marry Irish immigrants or Irish-Americans, most it seems did not. Further it is unclear how many of the first or second generation married Catholics. The first generation of Gallaghers that remained in Graceville retained their Catholic identity by their choice of marriage partners and by the organisations they joined. The evidence suggested too that a number of the second generation Gallaghers retained their Catholic identity. However nationality alone cannot determine religious identity but on the other hand, no evidence existed that any of the first or second generations married people who had descended from native families that had been established in one location for any considerable length of time. First generation Nugent immigrants married Irish immigrants, Irish-Americans, Germans, Norwegians, Scots, French Canadians and natives of mixed nationalities. The evidence underlined the diversity that existed in this time of mass migration across America in the late nineteenth century.

## **Education and Employment**

Many of the first generation male immigrants worked for the railway but others worked as labourers. First generation Coleman Bourke junior worked as a brakeman for the railway as did his brother Joseph. The son of Patrick Flaherty, Peter, worked as a railway inspector. By the second generation, two of Peter's sons also worked for the railway and another son Michael worked as a truck driver. Peter's daughter, Mary worked as a phone operator. Patrick Flaherty's eldest daughter married Martin Malone who worked as a labourer for the railroad. Her son worked as a bartender and her daughter was employed in a laundry. Redmond Flaherty who was born in 1860 lived in St Paul in the 1880s and worked with his son Patrick as day labourers. First generation John Grealish junior worked as a labourer in St Paul and in 1897 he worked in construction in Boston. His sister Julia married Charles

Gauthier who worked as a confectioner and cook. Julia's second husband was a bartender. Her son Frank worked as an electrician for a street car company and later worked as a lineman for the railway. The O'Brien family relocated to St Paul from Graceville. By 1890 James O'Brien and his sons, Martin and Stephen were employed as labourers. James O'Brien's daughters Mary and Margaret worked in a presser factory. His son Stephen worked in the flour mills in Minneapolis in 1900. James O'Brien spent his life working in menial employment where he earned little pay. As the age of 84 he continued to work; he was employed as a street worker.

Similar to men, the women of the first generation of Nugent's immigrants were employed in a number of low pay positions. Married women in America were regarded as the home-makers and did not take paid employment in great numbers in the late nineteenth century. Those that did were often forced to do so by economic necessity. The standard labour force participation rate in 1890 for women 15-64 years of age was 19 per cent for all women and 4.6 per cent for married women. However census information omitted female boarding house keepers, manufacturing workers and unpaid family farm labourers.<sup>820</sup> Nina, the widow of first generation Coleman Bourke junior supplemented her income by taking in boarders. When Nina married a second time after her children had been raised she continued to share her home with lodgers. The wife of first generation, John Coyne, was widowed early in her marriage and like Nina Bourke she remained a widow for a considerable time choosing employment over the security of marriage. Bertha Coyne worked as a seamstress and her daughter Margaret worked as a typist. But not all first generation women who were descendants of Nugent's immigrants or who married a descendant, worked in menial labour. Marie, the wife of first generation Joseph Bourke worked as a stenographer in 1920. The special skills and greater responsibilities of stenographers placed them in a separate labour pool. Stenographers had higher status than other female clerks. By the 1920s there was a dramatic increase in employment for single women. Typists, filing clerks, stenographers, and even some secretarial roles all became possibilities for the ambitious young woman.<sup>821</sup> Despite the demand for female labour and the employment opportunities, second generation Mamie Taylor worked in a commercial laundry as a mangler. Other second generation descendants included Patrick Flaherty's grand-daughters who worked in a paper factory.

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<sup>820</sup> Carter, Susan, B. *Labor Force for Historical Statistics of the United States, Millennial Edition*. University of California Project on the Historical Statistics of the United States Center for Social and Economic Policy. Policy Studies Institute, University of California, Riverside, September, 2003, pp 6-7

<sup>821</sup> MacDowell, Laurel, Sefton and Radforth, Ian (eds.), *Canadian Working-Class History*, (Toronto, 2006), p.189

Their sister Margaret fared better and was employed as a stenographer. Those who earned less income were more likely to be more dependent upon one another. Mamie Taylor shared her home with her step-father and her family. Her husband worked as a labourer and her step-father worked as a confectioner. Mamie worked as a housekeeper. James O'Brien and his wife also shared their home with their extended family. James in his eighties continued to share his home with his grandson and nephew.

Although the achievement of upward mobility for most of Nugent's immigrants took time there were exceptions. As previously outlined, education played an important role in the Gallagher family. Patrick Gallagher who was born in Ireland became a doctor. His nephew, whose father was Anthony Gallagher, also became a doctor. First generation Mary Gallagher's children were educated in St Paul and in North Dakota and one of her daughters became a teacher. Second generation Nora Reardon and her sister Helen Hicks also worked as public school teachers in Seattle. Public school female teachers were not always well-paid with large numbers taken from the working classes in the early twentieth century. Progressive education by the 1920s provided female teachers with improved pay and working conditions but men continued to dominate school boards and administration.<sup>822</sup> Other first generation women ran their own businesses albeit with family members. Anna Gallina ran a grocery business with her husband Albert for 27 years. Catherine the eldest daughter of John and Margaret Coyne also owned a grocery store with her husband in Spokane. Her son worked in the family business too. Edith Coyne the granddaughter of an original settler attended university in Kentucky and worked at Massachusetts General Hospital. She later founded her own company with her husband.

Another form of employment but one that must be considered separately was military service. Traditionally males were considered eligible for military service but this choice of employment also affected the families of those who enlisted. A number of descendants of Nugent's immigrants took part in various military campaigns including the Gallaghers, Grealishs, Flahertys and Kings. Second generation Thomas Costello, the eldest son of Mary Gallagher, was a soldier in WWI. His first cousin David, son of Anthony Gallagher was a soldier in WWII. A third generation of the Gallagher family and niece of Thomas and David, was Patricia Graham. She married George Flynn who served in the U.S. Navy in the Korean War. Third generation Myrle Taylor, the great-granddaughter of John Grealish married Howard Z. Rondeau who was a member of the U.S. air corps during WWII. A granddaughter

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<sup>822</sup> <http://www.pbs.org/onlyateacher/timeline.html>



of Patrick Flaherty, Anna Malone, married William Turner who had served in WWI. After military service William worked for the Minneapolis fire department. Third generation Patricia Flaherty married Vergil M Florhaug who was a Sergeant in the U.S. Army in the Korean War. Redmond Flaherty's grandson Robert was also a veteran of the Korean War. Martin King's grandson, Fred M McFarland was a soldier in the U.S. Army. His mother, Mary had left St Paul for Montana and married a retired veteran. The family tradition of military service continued with Peter Flaherty junior, a third generation Nugent immigrant who served in the Korean War. Conscription was applied during American military campaigns of the first half of the twentieth century so those who enlisted may not have volunteered. It is not known why the descendants of Nugent's immigrants enlisted but similar to so many others, an appreciation or defence of their way of life may have been a consideration. The history of the Irish in America was one where some men and their families supported military service. For many it proved beyond doubt their allegiance to America.

The genealogies of Nugent's immigrants clearly indicated that the individual traits of each family along with a certain degree of providence helped to provide opportunities for some but misfortune and hardship for others. The extremes can be seen by comparing the families. The Gallaghers along with the other families of Aughowe were noted as being of good appearance prior to their departure. The crisis faced by some families in the famine of 1880 may have lasted far longer and may have impaired or slowed their economic development. The Gallaghers remained in Graceville after 1880. It would appear they quickly acclimatised to American life. Members of the family continued farming while others quickly rose into the ranks of the professional classes. On the other hand Frances O'Molloy who was born in Minnesota had a life of hardship and uncertainty. She married her first husband in 1897 but by 1910 she had married a second time and had 2 sons and 4 daughters. Her second husband was 89 years of age and it would seem from the 60 year age difference that it was most likely Frances married to secure her family. A decade later Frances was widowed with the only income derived from her eldest son and daughter who were both factory workers. Her daughter's pay was modest, she being only 16 years old at the time. Ten years later Frances was in rented accommodation and the only income she had was from a boarder. At the age of 60 Frances was working as a housemaid; she continued to rent her home. In 1952 Frances died in the care of the Little Sisters of the Poor in Minneapolis at the age of 72. The

cause of her death had been due to recurring asthma.<sup>823</sup> There can be no doubt that Frances O'Molloy worked hard but misfortune followed her throughout her life. Frances had many dependents that from the start of their lives were raised in disadvantage as she struggled to support them. The contrast between the lives of the Gallaghers from Aughagower and the lives of some of the immigrants from south Galway was evident at the outset. The struggle faced by some of the poorest of south Connemara continued in America.

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<sup>823</sup> Ancestry.com 1885 Minnesota State Census, 1900, 1910, 1920, 1930, 1940 Federal Census [database online], Marriage Certificate 1897, Death Certificate Hennepin County, 1952

## Part 2: Family Histories

The immigrant families who remained in Graceville over a number of generations were easily identified as the population of the region did not expand and as they were land owners, the family farm was passed from one generation to the next. As noted in part 1, the challenge remained in identifying those who left Graceville for St Paul. However, by correlating information from the shipping list along with the testimonies provided to the Graceville Committee in December 1880, it was possible to apply variations to names and dates to successfully locate a number of families. A complexity with regard to family names continues to exist in Connemara where traditionally some family names change with each generation but locally the family is identified as the same family. Individuals are known by a patronymic composed of their own Christian name and those of a parent and grandparent – e.g. dramatist Johnny C  il Mhaidhc was officially John Costello. Other variations in surnames are due to ordinary complications in transition from one language to another, especially where people concerned are not literate in the new language. The system of patronymics is understood locally as it assists in identifying various generations who may share the same first and last names. In the nineteenth century, this name format was a natural result of language difference and perhaps illiteracy at a time when surnames were being standardised and explains why some families had a number of variations of their surname. The O'Molloy family as identified on the shipping list was recorded in various censuses as Mealia, Milia, and O'Maley. O'Malley and Melia are variations of    M  ille in county Galway and are further confused with    Maoldhia.

More challenges occurred in trying to identify various family members by age but variations were explained by the practice in census returns of rounding up or down of an age to the closest decade or half decade. Women who were 47 years old might record their age as 50, therefore, but most often as 45 years old. Errors as well as poor handwriting in the recording of names on the shipping list led to further frustrations. The surname of one family was recorded as Garco but this family was correctly identified as Earls from the Graceville testimonies. Figure 2 shows the Earl family recorded as Gargo on the shipping list and the shipping register. The immigrant's testimonies in December 1880 correctly identified the family as Earls. Other mistakes included J.J. Wood who was correctly identified as J.J. Ward.

Figure 2: Garco on Shipping list and register but Earls in testimonies.

1	Columbus	do	1	Male	
5	Michl. Garco		145		Laborer
6	Wm. J. Garco	do	145	Female	Wife
7	Mary	do	34		Spencer
8	Colman	do	18	Male	Laborer
9	Carthi	do	16	Female	Minister
10	Michl	do	144	Male	Laborer
11	Bridget	do	11	Female	Child
2	Margt	do	7		
3	Stephen	do	6	Male	
4	Barbara	do	4	Female	
5	Ann	do	1		

Name: Garco, Mich'l. Age: 45 Sex: M  
 (Date of Birth: Boston, Mass. U. S. "American")  
 Arrived (Port): June 20, 1900  
 If in U. S. before: Occupation: Laborer  
 Birthplace (Nationality): Galway, Ire.  
 Country of birth: Ireland  
 Last residence: Galway, Ire.  
 Destination (Place of which intend to become inhabitant):  
 Mental and bodily condition: List No. 200, 200, 200, 200  
 200, 201, 202, 203, 204, 205

**Report of a Graceville Committee.**  
 The following is the report of a committee appointed by the citizens of Graceville to inquire into the state of the Connemara emigrants:  
**MICHAEL EARLS INTERVIEWED.**  
 I have eleven in family, one boy working in S. Paul and two girls working in same place; my children came home with no money; one gave me \$5; I have been working all fall for others when I could spare time from my own work. Q. How are you situated? A. I have now about three-quarters of a cord of wood and about 400 or 500

As previously noted, the search for the immigrants was challenging when the information was incorrectly submitted on documents but it became even more difficult when the immigrants crossed state borders as most research centres concentrated solely on individual state census records. It was possible to discover descendants whilst they remained in Minnesota; however, upon their leaving the state the search had to resume at a separate location. With regard to this particular study, the search for Nugent's immigrants was made possible by the collection of on-line databases. By cross referencing and correlating information and by applying the knowledge gained in the process of this study it was possible

to identify a number of families.<sup>824</sup> Genealogical searches have further assisted with identifying areas where some of the families originated from.

Incorrect or poor handwriting are the most common feature in attempting to discover the Nugent descendants. Both of the Nee families originated from Clifden. Festy Nee who originated from Coolacloy was incorrectly entered on the shipping list as Testy Nee.<sup>825</sup> Mistakes in entries were also a common feature in census records. A number of families were found in the 1885 Minnesota state census but were difficult to trace after 1885. The Slanton family as identified by the shipping list was identified as the Stanton family in the 1885 census by matching first names and age differences. It must be noted that this seems to be the case with a number of entries in the 1885 Minnesota state census; also the data of many of the recorded ages on the census have a pencil mark or strike-through suggesting the ages were entered incorrectly.

#### 1. Slanton/Stanton Family - Minneapolis

<u>Shipping List</u>	<u>Age</u>	<u>Age in 1885 (State Census)</u>
Slanton Partick	40	50
Honor/Anna	35	40
Bridget	15	15
John	13	13
Mary	11	11
Philip	8	7
Michael	5	5
Patrick	4	4

In addition to the challenges that existed in discovering the immigrant families, further difficulties arose in correlating and presenting the research. Describing one family's genealogy in any detail presents challenges but as this study considered more than one family the difficulty lay in presenting the information in a format which was easily understood. For this purpose a genealogy chart was created to easily trace the generations. As each generation was described, a title outlining the generations was also included. Lastly, as generations repeated first names, this study indentified a son of the same name as his father as junior, and further identified the father as senior.

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<sup>824</sup> Although there are a great number of sites that assist in genealogy studies the majority of records were found via Ancestry.com, *FamilySearch*, findmypast.ie and findagrave.com

<sup>825</sup> Ireland Births and Baptisms, 1620-1881, index, *FamilySearch* (<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:FGL6-682>), Thomas Nee in entry for John Nee, 11 Jul 1877; citing Galway, Ireland, reference v 14-1 p 188; FHL microfilm 255,990

## Did a Cluster of Nugent's Immigrants Exist?

As already noted, it was possible to trace a number of the families who left Graceville. However, before the families are identified one question which remains unanswered is did the families relocate to the cities as a group? It has been previously stated that the families settled in a number of locations in St Paul and Minneapolis with the suggestion that they relocated as a number of large groups which in turn led to areas called after them such as the Connemara Patch in St Paul. But did a cluster of Nugent's immigrants exist? The 1885 census failed to show signs that any significant cluster did exist but one census page indicated four families resided close to one another; Curran, Green, O'Molloy and Flaherty. As sufficient information existed regarding the Flaherty family they will be examined in greater detail at a later point in this chapter.

The three remaining families who lived in ward 5 in St Paul included Thomas Curren who was noted as Cirvan on the shipping list and as Curran by the Graceville Committee. The second family was identified as Thomas Green. The shipping list indicated there were two persons in the same family identified as Mary Green; however, the absence of Mary and the youngest member of the family who was aged two in 1880 could imply these were additional persons added to the family for the purpose of seeking free passage to America.

### 2. Cirvan/Curran/Curren family – Ward 5 St Paul

<u>Shipping List</u>	<u>Age</u>	<u>Age in 1885 (State Census)</u>
Thomas Cirvan	45	35
Bridget	45	34
Patrick	20	--
Honor	22	--
Margaret	17	20
Sarah	15	18
Barbara	11	15
John	7	12

### 3. Thomas and Barbara Green – Ward 5 St Paul

<u>Shipping List</u>	<u>Age</u>	<u>Age 1885 (State Census)</u>
Thomas Green	40	45
Barbara	38	45
Mary	18	--
Patrick	14	unable to correctly identify age (strike-through)
Bridget	11	as above
Mary	10	as above
John	7	8
Coleman	4	6
Honor	2	--

The last family identified as living close to others of Nugent's immigrants was the family of Edward O'Molloy. The testimony given to the Graceville Committee was provided by Edward Mealia who stated Father Ryan did not assist his family when they were in need of food and fuel. It was the committee's opinion the 'family were not reliable and ... not capable of taking care of themselves'.<sup>826</sup> The O'Molloy family as noted earlier were identified by variations of the name Melia. In 1885, Edward's family remained in St Paul. His son Valentine, married Mary Mulcairn and he, along with his two children also lived in St Paul.

#### 4. Edward and Mary O'Molloy/Mealia/Milia/O'Maley Family – Ward 5 St Paul

<u>Shipping List</u>	<u>Age</u>	<u>Age in 1885</u>
Edward O'Molloy	45	50
Mary	40	50
Michael	20	26
Valentine	18	--
Sarah	16	20
Mary	14	17
Honor	11	15
Bridget	7	10

Edward's daughter Frances who was born in Minnesota, married Charles Wesley Cookman in 1897. The wedding took place in Superior Wisconsin which is linked by bridge to Duluth in Minnesota. Charles was a labourer when he married Frances and a year after the couple married their son James was born. By 1900 Charles was no longer working as a labourer but was a restaurant owner.<sup>827</sup> As far greater detail was found for other families, the lineage search for the O'Molloy family was not continued. For the purposes of examining any cluster of immigrants these families have been included. However, if a cluster is defined as more than four families, then these families do not support any theory that Nugent's immigrants resided in large groups close to one another. A city map of 1884 identified the wards of St Paul; ward 5 was not located along the Mississippi river where the Connemara Patch was located. Although it is incorrect to state Nugent's immigrants settled in an area called the Connemara Patch, it is most likely this area did have immigrants who originated in Connemara. It must be remembered; the Tuke Committee sent immigrants to Minnesota in the immediate years after Nugent's immigrants arrived in St Paul.

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<sup>826</sup> *Saint Paul and Minneapolis Pioneer Press*, 21 December 1880

<sup>827</sup> Ancestry.com 1885 Minnesota State Census, 1900 Federal Census [database on-line]

## **Nugent's Immigrants – Family Genealogies Beyond 1885**

As stated previously, five families remained in Big Stone County and included the families of Austin Burke, John Coyne, Lawrence Flaherty, John Gallagher and Austin Ready. As the scope of this study cannot consider each family, two families that remained in Big Stone County were examined. The Gallagher family was selected as it was possible to identify where this family had originated. Secondly, the Coyne family will be examined but at a later point in this chapter. Research of the Coyne family revealed links with other families who were assisted to leave and may provide the answer as to why certain families were selected.

### **5. John Gallagher and Annie Lavelle**

John Gallagher and Annie Lavelle married in the parish of Oughaval in south Mayo in 1861. The family lived in a number of locations in south Mayo including Lettereragh, Kilgeever, Dooleague, Doon and Aughagower before emigrating in 1880. The Gallagher family was selected by Father Stephens who had previously claimed that a member of Nugent's investigative team, Hugh L. Smyth, had shown favour to the Irish Church Missions by providing a donation of £20 to Revd M. Clesham. The Gallagher's were one of five families who emigrated from Aughagower. William J. Onahan stated the families who immigrated from Aughagower did not look as emaciated as the others from south Connemara and were provided with better clothing.

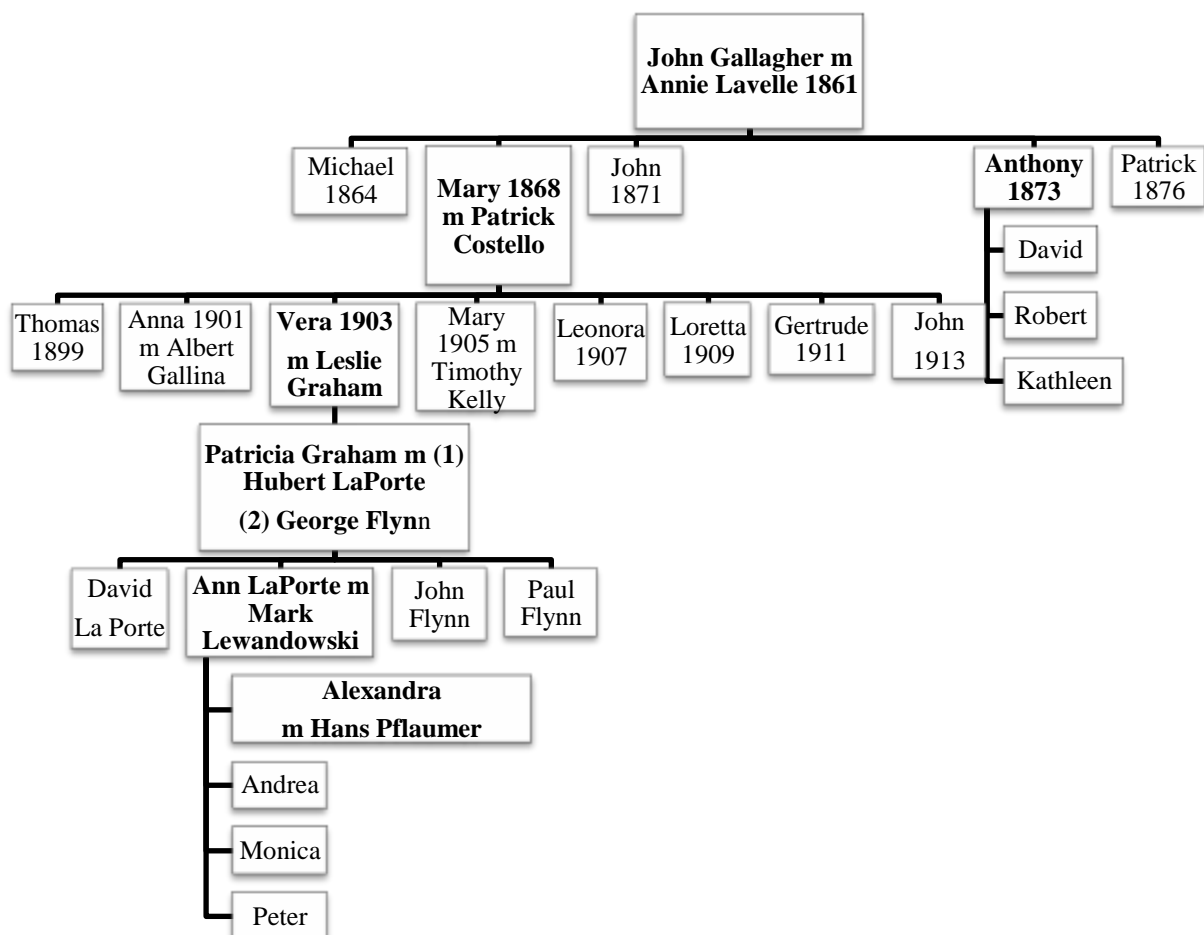
The Gallaghers successfully adapted to life on the prairie, the women working in the home and the men farming the land. Two decades later, in 1900, John, his wife Annie and their three youngest sons remained on the land provided for them by John Ireland in Big Stone County.<sup>828</sup> The Gallagher family was literate and education was important to them: the youngest son Patrick left Big Stone to be educated as a medical doctor while his brother Anthony remained on the family farm. John Gallagher who was recognised as a Minnesota pioneer, died in 1909. John and his sons who had remained in Minnesota were active in their community and clung to their Catholic Irish identity. As members of the Ancient Order of Hibernians they retained links with Bishop John Ireland and assisted in developing the emerging Catholic colonies of western Minnesota. John Gallagher died when he was 79 years old and had lived for almost 30 years close to Graceville on the 160 acre farm he had

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<sup>828</sup> Minnesota Historical Society Minnesota State Population Census: schedules, 1865-1905 (1885) Roll 21.



acquired in 1880. Prior to immigrating to Minnesota the family had moved and relocated on a number of occasions, however each new location failed to provide the family with the stability required to put down firm roots. In Big Stone, John Gallagher invested in land he owned. With no mortgage and with the necessary tools to farm, he and his children lived comfortably and became respected members of their community.<sup>829</sup>



John's wife Annie died ten years after her husband's death in 1919. By this time her sons Patrick and Edward were working and living in Spokane in Washington. The eldest Gallagher son, Edward, was noted on the shipping list but was not a full-biological sibling as no record of birth existed. The lack of birth record cannot be seen as an oversight as all of the Gallagher children were recorded at birth at various locations where the family resided. The practice of accepting responsibility for extended family members was not unusual. A third

<sup>829</sup> Minnesota Historical Society. Thirteenth Census of the United States: 1910; Minnesota Historical Centre; Minnesota Historical Society, *Graceville Enterprise* Friday march 26, 1909, page 1

son, Michael moved to St Paul.<sup>830</sup> As insufficient documentation existed to further research Edward, Michael, John or Patrick, their genealogies came to an end. Although it cannot be assumed the Gallagher brothers lived long and productive lives, the level of education achieved by Patrick may provide some indication. Patrick was four years of age when he arrived in America and as such may have gained many advantages by being of America. It was unlikely that the son of a migrant labourer from the mountainous regions of south Mayo could have become a medical doctor at the turn of the twentieth century in Ireland.

### *John Gallagher – Mary Costello*

Two of the Gallagher children did remain in western Minnesota. Mary Gallagher married Patrick Costello in 1897 and resided in Leonardsville in Traverse County, which was situated north of Big Stone County.<sup>831</sup> Patrick Costello was an Irish immigrant who borrowed to purchase his farm which suggests by the 1890s the opportunity to acquire free land had expired. Mary and Patrick had eight children and it was evident that education played an important role in the Costello family. By 1920 their eldest son, Thomas, attended school in St Paul while their daughter Anna was teaching. Another daughter Vera was also away from home attending school in Valley City in North Dakota.<sup>832</sup> The parish records of Graceville indicated Anna and Vera were educated at St. Mary's Academy. This private Catholic school was run by the Franciscan Order and was a sister school to St. Josephs of Clarondolet in St. Paul. The eldest three Costello children who attended St. Mary's achieved excellent grades. Thomas consistently averaged 80 in his four years at St. Mary's Academy, while Anna and Vera both averaged above 80 with Vera having the most impressive grades of above 90.<sup>833</sup>

In 1930 Mary and Patrick remained on the farm in Leonardsville but most of their children had left the home with the exception of the youngest child John and the eldest son Thomas. At 31 years of age it was unusual that Thomas was residing with his parents considering he had previously left home to be educated in St Paul. It must be assumed his level of education afforded him good employment opportunities. However one of those early opportunities included the military. Thomas was a soldier in WWI and may have suffered physically or mentally and may have resided with his parents while he recovered. The

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<sup>830</sup> *Graceville Enterprise* December 12, 1919

<sup>831</sup> Holy Rosary Catholic Church, Graceville. Marriage records; 1895 Minnesota State Census, Minnesota Historical Centre

<sup>832</sup> 1920 Census information, Minnesota Historical Society.

<sup>833</sup> Holy Rosary Catholic Church, Graceville. St. Mary's Academy school records

youngest Costello son, John, worked the farm with his father and in turn inherited the farm as by 1940 he was the only sibling who remained in Big Stone. Thomas had migrated and was residing in San Diego in California in the 1950s. Thomas may have relocated to California because his sister Loretta Buscher had married and was living there.<sup>834</sup>

Of the Costello children who left western Minnesota, Mary Costello married Timothy Kelly and moved to Chicago, Vera married Leslie Graham and settled in International Falls in Minnesota and Anna married Albert Gallina and relocated to Keewatin in Minnesota. By 1955 when Mary Costello died at the age of 84, two of her children, Leonora and Gertrude along with her husband Patrick had preceded her in death.<sup>835</sup>

### *John Gallagher – Mary Costello – Anna Gallina*

As previously noted a number of the descendants of Mary and Patrick Costello left Big Stone County and relocated to other areas of Minnesota. Anna Costello married Albert Gallina who had immigrated to Minnesota from Italy at the age of 11 in 1906. The Gallina family spoke Italian and continued to use this language as their primary language along with English. Albert was of medium build with blue eyes and dark hair and had worked as a grocer. Albert with the help of his wife and family ran the grocery store for 27 years. Albert was further known in his home town of Keewatin as an excellent musician who played the trombone in the City Band for 35 years. He was a member of the local fire department and the American Legion. As with most new towns established in Minnesota, over twenty languages were spoken in Keewatin with immigrants from Italy, Ireland, Yugoslavia, Finland, Germany and Poland to name a few. A dynamic multi-ethnic community existed in the early years of Keewatin with places identified as ‘little Italy’ and ‘Little Austria’, and with stories of how an Italian immigrant, Germano Comparoni sang Italian Opera as he cleaned the streets of Keewatin. Logging was exhausted as an industry by the early twentieth century and replaced by mining as the main source of employment in Keewatin and indeed had provided the impetus to build Keewatin.<sup>836</sup>

Anna and Albert married late in life and did not have children. They lived in a considerable home valued at \$7,000 in 1930. Keewatin was more than 250 miles from Graceville and Anna may not have taken the long journey to western Minnesota too often. Anna’s sister Vera lived in International Falls a little more than 100 miles northwest of

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<sup>834</sup> 1930 United States Federal Census, Minnesota Historical Society

<sup>835</sup> *Graceville Enterprise* 27 September, 1955.

<sup>836</sup> Keewatin Fiftieth Anniversary 1906-1956, Printed by the Eastern Itasca, Published 1956, <http://www.lakesnwoods.com/KeewatinHistory.htm>;

Keewatin and Anna may have had regular contact with her sister. Albert Gallina died in 1968 in Itasca in northern Minnesota.<sup>837</sup> Anna died in 1982 also in Itasca; she was 81 years of age.<sup>838</sup> Although the couple had no children, they lived in Itasca where Albert and his family had resided since 1913 ensuring they were surrounded by an extended family and a strong and diverse community. Unlike towns and cities of the east coast of America a cultural and class divide does not appear to have existed. However, this does not include diversity in terms of colour of skin as few people of black heritage resided in Minnesota when compared to white populations in the nineteenth century. Keewatin in northern Minnesota provided opportunities for those willing to apply themselves with no religious and cultural barriers. What was seen as different in the East was the norm in the mid-west.

*John Gallagher – Mary Costello – Vera Graham – Patricia Hubert La Porte/Flynn – Ann Lewandowski – Alexandra Pflaumer*

The second daughter of Mary and Patrick, Vera Costello was born in 1903. She married Leslie J. Graham who was born in Wisconsin of French Canadian parentage and resided in International Falls in Koochiching County in Minnesota. Vera was well educated and had attended college for two years. Leslie worked as a steam fitter in a paper mill in 1930. Vera gave birth to two daughters, Patricia and Mary. By 1940 Leslie was promoted at the paper mill to a maintenance foreman; his annual income was \$2,700 which when compared to twelve other families who lived in the same area was substantial. The only other male whose wage exceeded Leslie's was employed by the Federal Government as a Customs Officer, his wage was £2,800.

The eldest daughter of Vera Graham, Patricia, graduated from International Falls High School and received her Bachelor's Degree from St. Scholastica College in Duluth in Minnesota. Patricia married Hubert J. LaPorte and had two children, David and Ann La Porte. Hubert died in 1963 and Vera married her second husband, George Flynn in 1964 in Appleton Minnesota. Vera had two more sons with George; John and Paul Flynn. George Flynn died in 2014. George's obituary stated he served in the U.S. Navy during the Korean War and that he was a long time member of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, VFW Post 388. He was also very active in the Boy Scouts of America and served as President of the Samoset

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<sup>837</sup> Ancestry.com U.S. census [database on-line] 1920, 1930, 1940; Social Security Death Index, Albert Gallina.

<sup>838</sup> Minnesota Death Index, Anna Gallina, File# 003778, record# 2069282; U.S. Social Security Index provide SSN# 468-76-9817 and last known residence, 55753 Keewatin, Itasca, MN

Council. In 2013 George participated in the Never Forgotten Honor Flight whereby, as a senior veteran, he was flown to Washington D.C. to visit the war memorial to the Korean War.<sup>839</sup> Patricia Flynn died 24 February 2015; she was 79 years of age.

Patricia Flynn's obituary stated she died in Wausau, Wisconsin. Her sons David La Porte and John Flynn resided in Wausau, while her son Paul Flynn resided in Grand Rapids in Michigan with his wife Krista. Vera's daughter, Ann La Porte, was married to Mark Lewandowski and resided in Hutchinson, Minnesota. Patricia's nine grandchildren included Andrea, Alexandra, Monica and Peter Lewandowski. Ann and Mark Lewandowski's daughter Alexandra married Hans Pflaumer in 2013. Both Alexandra and Hans were graduates of St Thomas University in St Paul. While Alexandra was born in California her husband Hans was born and raised in Buenos Aires, Argentina, before his parents moved to Minneapolis in Minnesota. It is worth noting that the University of St Thomas was founded by Archbishop John Ireland and that historian James Shannon was a past President of St Thomas.<sup>840</sup> Patricia's Flynn's grandchildren are the great-great-great grandchildren of John Gallagher and Mary Lavelle who married in Oughaval, Mayo in 1861.

#### *John Gallagher – Mary Costello – Loretta Buscher*

The obituary of Mary Costello in 1955 provided information with regard to her surviving children. Mary, the third child of Mary and Patrick Costello, married but as the surname of her spouse is Kelly her name was an archetypal Irish name, Mary Kelly, and she is further obscured by the fact that she resided in Chicago. The history of the Irish in Chicago includes many Mary Kellys and as no specific information can accurately identify Mary Costello's daughter Mary junior, this particular line cannot continue.

Mary Kelly's sister, Loretta Buscher, married Daniel J. Buscher and lived in San Diego, California from 1945 to 1972. The city directories provided a small insight into their lives. In 1946 Daniel was an ice-cream maker but by the following year he was working as a salesman for the Challenge Cream and Butter Association. Beginning in 1910 the association was the first successful group of farmers who sold their butter cooperatively in large urban centres. The government requisitioned huge volumes of the cooperatives produce during the

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<sup>839</sup> <http://www.legacy.com/obituaries/WausauDailyHerald/obituary.aspx?n=George-Flynn&pid=171501754>

<sup>840</sup> <http://brainardfuneral.com/patricia-flynn/>; <http://hansandalexandra.ourwedding.com/>;  
[http://www.crowrivermedia.com/hutchinsonleader/news/engagement---alexandra-lewandowski-and-hans-pflaumer/article\\_3be6b6a6-2aec-57e8-8061-c7cd0d9e629b.html](http://www.crowrivermedia.com/hutchinsonleader/news/engagement---alexandra-lewandowski-and-hans-pflaumer/article_3be6b6a6-2aec-57e8-8061-c7cd0d9e629b.html)

Second World War but in the years following the war the association expanded once more.<sup>841</sup> In 1948 a new plant was opened in Berkeley in California and sales further increased with the introduction of refrigerated trucks in the early 1950s. Daniel remained working for the cooperative until his retirement which was noted in the 1965 city directory. Daniel died the following year; he had retired early and was sixty years of age when he died. The city directories from 1967 to 1972 indicated Loretta's profession. Following her husband's death, Loretta worked as a nurse at the County Hospital and at the University Hospital. Loretta remained working as a nurse in her sixties.<sup>842</sup> Unfortunately on-line database searches for Daniel and Loretta did not reveal census information so it is unknown if Loretta and Daniel had children. Loretta died in 1998 aged 91 years.<sup>843</sup>

*John Gallagher – Anthony Gallagher – David and Robert P. Gallagher*

John Gallagher, Mary Costello's youngest son remained in Big Stone as did his uncle, Mary Costello's brother, Anthony Gallagher. Anthony was 27 years old in 1900 and resided on the original homestead in Moonshine.<sup>844</sup> A decade later Anthony had not married and was living with his mother. His father had died a year previously and Anthony hired help to assist with the farm work. In 1918 a military registration draft card provided a description of Anthony and as no images existed of those who immigrated in 1880 it was used to consider the physical features of this family bearing in mind how successful the Gallaghers were on the prairie. Anthony was of medium build with blue eyes and light brown hair.

Anthony married a Scottish woman called Elizabeth who had immigrated to the U.S. in 1904. By 1930 the couple had three children.<sup>845</sup> David was born in 1914; his brother Robert and sister Kathleen were born in the following two years. Figure 1 indicated the farms of Nugent's immigrants in 1931.

The second son of Anthony Gallagher, Robert P. Gallagher, became a doctor as his uncle Patrick had before him. Robert worked at the Hedemark Clinic in Ortonville Minnesota

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<sup>841</sup> *History of Challenge Cream and Butter Association*, (Los Angeles, 1941)

<sup>842</sup> San Diego City Directories, 1946-1972

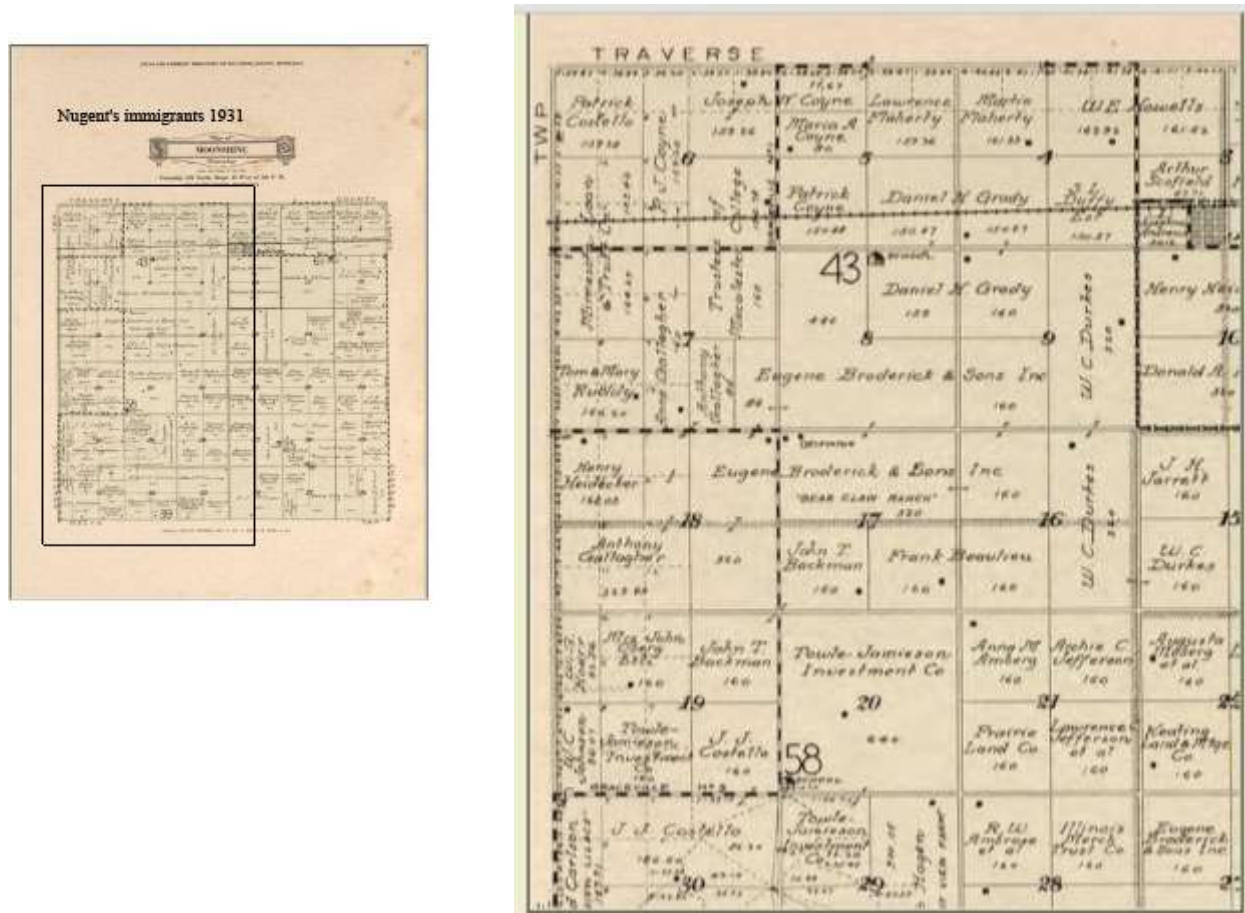
<sup>843</sup> California Death Index, SSN#501032953

<sup>844</sup> Warren Upham, Minnesota Place Names, MHS, <http://mnplaces.mnhs.org/upham/Results.cfm>. The township of Moonshine took its name from Moonshine Lake which was named by D.K.J. Clark who was a settler in Malta. On Clark's first night in Moonshine he camped beside the lake, he intended to call the lake Moon Lake after the surname of his wife, Mary A. (Moon) Clark but in the evening the bright moonlight caused the name to be thus changed. 1900 Federal Census, Minnesota Historical Society

<sup>845</sup> 1910, 1920 Federal Census, Minnesota Historical Society, U.S., World War I Draft Registration Cards, 1917-1918, Ancestry.com.

and subsequently opened an office in Amarillo in Texas in 1952.<sup>846</sup> Anthony Gallagher died in January 1960 at 86 years of age. For the two years prior to his death he also lived in Amarillo. He was buried in Graceville Minnesota where he lived from a young age; he was further an American citizen.<sup>847</sup>

Fig 1: Farms of Nugent's Immigrants and their Descendants in Big Stone County 1931



Section from *Atlas and Farmers' Directory of Big Stone County, Minnesota* (Webb Publishing Company, 1931)

David Gallagher, the eldest son of Anthony and Elizabeth was employed by the Federal Government in 1940; the census describes his occupation as assistant superintendant in a County Home for Boys in Minnetonka, Hennepin in Minnesota. His annual income was \$1,140 and in the week prior to the census being taken David stated he worked 72 hours that week which implies his work was demanding. David had received a college education and at the time of the census in 1940 he was unmarried.<sup>848</sup> The Department of Veteran Affairs files indicated David enlisted in the army in May 1942; he took part in active duty in World War

<sup>846</sup> *Graceville Enterprise* 19 August, 1952

<sup>847</sup> Death Certificate, Anthony Gallagher. Ancestry.com

<sup>848</sup> 1940 Federal Census, Ancestry.com

II and was discharged in November 1945. David Gallagher died in July in 1999 at 85 years of age; his last residence was Butte, Silver Bow in Montana. David was also buried in Graceville Cemetery.<sup>849</sup>

## 6. Coleman and Margaret Bourke

Coleman Bourke was 45 years old when he and his wife immigrated to Minnesota. They travelled with their nine children of whom two were males under seven years old in 1880. In many ways this gender weighing of females presented the family with challenges. No doubt females worked as hard on the homestead as males but it was the gender sharing of the workload that helped families to build homes on the prairies. Honor Bourke was 18 years old in 1880 and possibly found employment in St Paul which in turn may have encouraged the Bourke family to leave Big Stone County and relocate to St Paul. Coleman and Margaret's other daughters, Barbara aged 16 in 1880 and Mary aged 14, may not have not reached an age to be independent of the family. Conversely, had they gained employment in St Paul this would have provided even greater encouragement for the remainder of the family to leave the prairie for the city. The gender weighing of females also presented challenges when attempting to investigate the genealogy of the family. Typically when women married, they changed their name to that of their spouse and without marriage certificates, female lineage is difficult to trace. The Bourke family had two daughters named Honor and as noted earlier it was possible that additional persons were included with the families travelling. The Gallagher family who remained in Graceville had an additional male accompany them and perhaps Honor aged 18 in 1880 was a niece and not the biological child of Coleman and Margaret.

### *Coleman Bourke – Coleman Bourke junior*

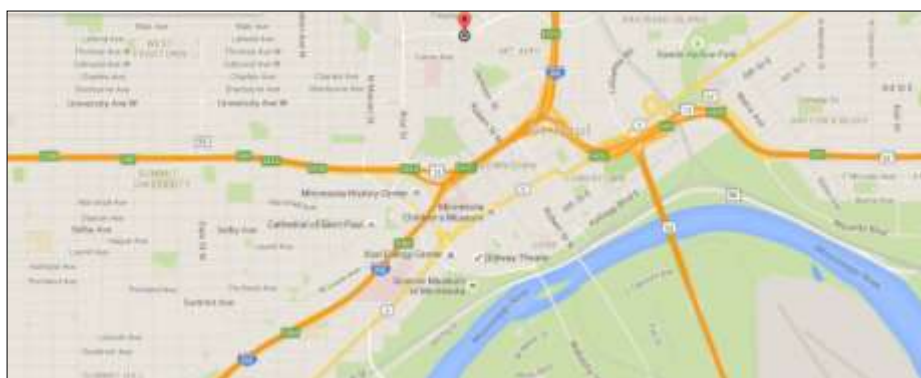
The Minnesota Territorial and State Census of 1895 provided information with regard to Coleman Bourke and his family who lived at the corner of Jackson St and Pennsylvania Avenue in St Paul in ward 1 of the city. Figure 2 is a modern map with the location indicated but as can be clearly seen, the location of the Bourke family in 1895 was not at Dayton's Bluff or below Summit Avenue where the Connemara Patch was located.

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<sup>849</sup> Social Security Death Index SSN#469-01-3854; U.S., Department of Veterans Affairs BIRLS Death File, 1850-2010, Ancestry.com



Fig 2: W Pennsylvania Ave and Jackson St, St Paul MN<sup>850</sup>

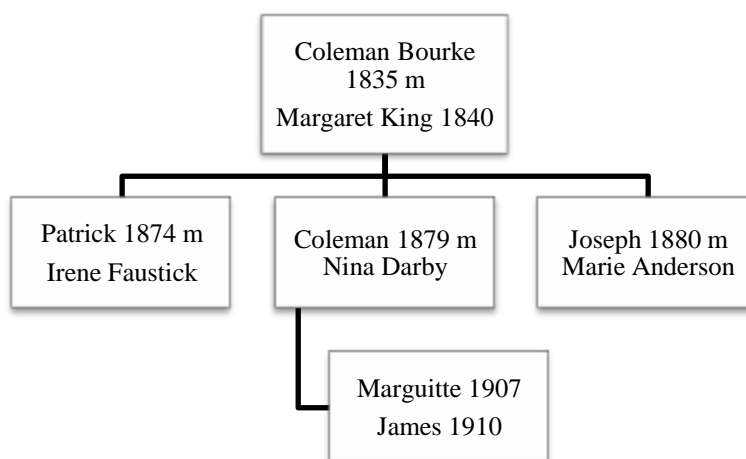


The City Directory of 1885 outlines the seven wards of St Paul. Ward 1 stretched from the Mississippi River at Broadway north to New Canada. Jackson St bordered Wards 1 and 2.<sup>851</sup> In 1895 Coleman and Margaret's sons resided with them, their first son Coleman junior as noted earlier was born in Ireland but their tenth child and third son Joseph, was born in Minnesota. Coleman was 16 and Joseph was 14. None of the Bourke's eight daughters resided with them at this time, so the family was probably dependent on Coleman's income from work as a labourer. Low paid work such as labouring was sporadic with no employment during the harsh winter months and difficult working conditions during the warm summer months when humidity was high.

Figure 3: Coleman and Margaret Bourke

#### Shipping List

Coleman	1835
Margaret King	1840
Honor	1862
Barbara	1864
Mary	1866
Margaret	1869
Annie	1870
Bridget	1873
<b>Patrick</b>	<b>1874</b>
Honor	1876
<b>Coleman junior</b>	<b>1879</b>
<b>Joseph</b>	<b>1880</b>



<sup>850</sup><https://www.google.ie/maps/dir/W+Pennsylvania+Ave+%26+Jackson+St,+St+Paul,+MN+55103,+USA/@44.9507449,-93.1021233,14z/data=!4m13!1m4!3m3!1s0x52b32aaa61c7a227:0x67d9e368d1f99c83!2sW+Pennsylvania+Ave+%26+Jackson+St,+St+Paul,+MN+55103,+USA!3b1!4m7!1m0!1m5!1m1!1s0x52b32aaa61c7a227:0x67d9e368d1f99c83!2m2!1d-93.09972!2d44.9604631>

<sup>851</sup> St. Paul, Minnesota 1885 Ward Descriptions, *R.L. Polk & Co.'s 1885-6 St. Paul City Directory* (1885)

In researching the first generation of the Bourke family, it must be noted that the spelling of the family name had changed to Burke. Coleman E. Burke the son of Coleman and Margaret was born in March 1879 in Doozear in Galway. His marriage to Nina F. Darby was a source of valuable information. The marriage took place in 1904 and recorded his mother's maiden name which was King. Coleman was married previously but divorced in St Paul. Coleman married Nina in Anaconda in Deer Lodge County in Montana. Nina's parents were James A. Darby and Lizzie Bullimoor. Lizzie A Darby, Nina's mother, was born in Minnesota in 1858 after her parents had emigrated from England. She married James Darby in 1880. In 1900 Lizzie lived in Anaconda in Montana with her husband and children including Nina who was born in 1882. Nina had been born in Missouri and her father had been born in Ohio. This family is an example of the extent of migration that was taking place in America in the late nineteenth century. The Darby family had resided in Minnesota before migrating west but whether or not Nina knew Coleman while they both resided in Minnesota is unknown.<sup>852</sup> The hierarchy chart of figure 3 indicated the family members that were possible to trace. The female family members are noted according to the shipping list record.

In 1910 Coleman and Nina lived in Bellingham in Whatcom, Washington. They had two children, Marguitte aged three and James aged one. Mary Sperry also lived with the family; Mary was Nina's sister who had divorced her husband. The Burke family in 1910 had members of their extended family who had lived in England, Ireland, Missouri, Ohio and Minnesota. By 1910 the Burkes were renting their home and Coleman was employed by the Railway as a brakeman. Typically brakemen held one of the lowest and most dangerous occupations on the railways or freight trains. In instances where brakemen were required to apply the brake to each carriage they had to walk on top of the moving carriages to manually apply the brakes regardless of weather conditions. The 1912 city directory for Bellingham in Washington further lists Coleman as a brakeman, his address was given as 2315 Iron Street. Whatcom was incorporated with other smaller towns in Bellingham Bay to become Bellingham in 1903; the Burkes remained in the same area for a number of years. Coleman died in 1915 at age 36, which must have left his young family in hardship. Coleman was buried in Upper Hill Cemetery, Anaconda in Montana. He was buried alone which may have indicated his family moved from Deer Lodge County over time. However, this did not occur in the immediate years following his death. The 1917 city directory of Bellingham stated

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<sup>852</sup> Montana County Marriage FHL file number 1906089; 1900 U.S. Federal Census, Anaconda, Deer Lodge Montana

Coleman's wife remained unmarried and was employed as a clerk; she resided at 211 Commercial Street North.<sup>853</sup>

By 1920 Nina was 36 years old. She lived in Bellingham and was the head of the household. She raised her family in difficult circumstances by sharing her home with lodgers. As her children were still young; her daughter Margaret was 13, and her son James was 11 years old, Nina's choice of lodgers seemed pragmatic. Among the lodgers were the Shannon family who included a young married couple with their infant. Nina's brother, Charles J. Darby, who was 24 years old, was also a lodger. Nina supplemented her income with lodgers and also worked as a salesperson at a dry goods store. Nina's brother was the proprietor of a cigar store and it was possible that Nina was working for him. Charles may have started a business and was working and saving money by lodging with his sister and at the same time employing family members.

By 1930 Nina had married once more. Her spouse, William Robinson was self employed as an inspector in the lumber industry. Robinson was a man of English descent whose parents came to America from Canada. By this time Nina was 48 years of age and was renting her home for \$30 annually. The family continued to keep lodgers in their home on Grand Avenue in Bellingham. Mary Sperry, who remained living with Nina, worked as a saleslady in a department store. Nina's daughter Margaret aged 22 and her son James aged 20 were listed as William's stepchildren in census information. James was also working as a salesman in a clothing store.

In 1940 Nina continued to reside in Bellingham with Mary Sperry. Nina owned her home; of the nine homes on the census page that were owned, the highest value was \$3,500. Two homes had this value, one of which was Nina's. In comparing wage rates, Mary Sperry who worked as a sales lady in a millinery store earned \$1,800 for 52 weeks of work which was high when compared to a hotel cook who earned \$1,377 for 50 weeks of work, similarly a sales person in a furniture store who also worked 52 weeks earned \$1,430. Nina's husband was working in North Bend City in Oregon in 1940. He earned \$2,038 as a lumber inspector for 48 weeks work.

Nina's children left Washington; James E. Burke had relocated to San Francisco in California by 1940. At 31 years of age, James was employed as a salesman in a department store. His remuneration for 50 weeks work was \$1,000. The U.S. Federal Census of 1940 was released by the U.S. National Archives in 2012 through a partnership with Archives.com. The

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<sup>853</sup> R.L. Polk and Co., Bellingham City Directories 1912, 1917; 1910 Federal Census Bellingham City, Whatcom, Washington;

1940 census is the largest and most comprehensive set of records available of those who were living in the United States at the time the census was taken. Due to the fact the 1940 U.S. census is digitised the system helps to locate an individual particularly one living alone as generally a number of indicators are required to identify an individual. The digitising process eliminates ambiguity when exact information leads to a single individual and this was the case for James Burke. As the 1940 census is the latest available census it is difficult to trace people after this date. Using the same process of elimination, James E. Burke was identified in the Social Security Death Index for Seattle; he died in November 1970. The last known residence of James E. Burke was 98103 Seattle, King County in Washington.

#### *Coleman Bourke – Patrick Burke*

As already noted, Coleman and Margaret Burke had three sons; it was possible to trace another son, Patrick Burke who married Irene Faustick on 2 November 1908 when he was 34 years old. Patrick and Irene's marriage took place in Butte, Silver Bow County in Montana.<sup>854</sup> Irene Faustick was born in Detroit in Michigan in 1883. Montana County Marriages indicated Minnie Irene Faustick was a widow and married for a second time in November 1911. Patrick Burke therefore died between 1908 and 1911. Irene's second husband was J.M. Ayers.<sup>855</sup> Patrick and Irene Burke had no children. As this part of this study is concerned with the lineage of the 35 families who immigrated in 1880 and as Patrick died leaving no children, this particular line ends with his death.

#### *Coleman Bourke – Joseph Burke*

Margaret and Coleman's last and tenth child was named Joseph; his birth record is of note as it raises more questions about Nugent's immigrants. His birth certificate was verified by his family name and mother's maiden name, King, which was discovered by the marriage certificate of his brother Coleman. Joseph was born on 16 October 1880 in St Paul which indicated Margaret was pregnant when travelling to America and secondly that the family had left Big Stone County prior to any controversy or perhaps may have never resided in rural Minnesota.<sup>856</sup> The testimonies provided by Nugent's immigrants in December 1880 to the Graceville Committee did not provide any statement from Coleman Burke's family

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<sup>854</sup> Montana County Marriages File# 1906802

<sup>855</sup> Montana County Marriages File# 1906090

<sup>856</sup> Joseph Francis Burke, 16 October 1880 St Paul MN., Minnesota Births and Christening Index, FHL# 1309120

adding to the possibility that the Burke family immigrated to St Paul and not to Graceville or at least if they arrived in Graceville they stayed there for a brief period only.<sup>857</sup>

The WWI draft registration card of 1917-18 described Joseph Burke as tall, stout with grey/blue eyes and brown hair. At 37 years of age, Joseph would have not been called for active duty but the draft registration cards are of interest as they assist in correlating location and date of birth. Joseph was employed by the Northern Pacific Railway as a locomotive engineer.

Joseph married Marie Anderson in 1911; Marie's parents, Alexander Anderson and Olina Hahlan had emigrated to the U.S. from Norway.<sup>858</sup> By 1920 Joseph and Marie were 39 years of age and did not have children, Joseph remained working for the railway as a locomotive engineer. His wife Marie worked as a stenographer for a law firm. Although the couple did not have children they had family members living with them. Marie's sister, Dophine Anderson was 25 years of age and also worked as a stenographer for the Federal Board. Carl Bernard Anderson who was 35 worked for a transfer company. According to the WWII draft registration card for Carl he was born in Osakis in Minnesota in 1885 which places the Burke and Anderson families in Minnesota at the same time. Carl continued to work in the transport industry and was employer as opposed to employee of the American Transfer Company by 1942.

The 1930 census provided information with regard to the home Marie and Joseph shared. Of the 16 homes included on the census page, half were rented properties. Joseph owned his home but when compared to other homes that were also owned, his home was modest and valued at \$1,000. All other homes are valued at more than \$4,000 with one home valued at \$9,000; another which was owned by a company president was valued at \$72,000. This implies the area where Joseph and Marie lived attracted those who could afford to buy property which implied it was a desirable place to live. By 1930 Joseph and Marie lived alone on Prospect Street. Joseph continued to work as a railway engineer and Marie continued to work as a stenographer for a law-firm. When taking into account the economic climate that prevailed following the stock market crash of 1929, this family were fortunate in having no dependents, they owned their home and they both had long term employment which offered security and financial stability.<sup>859</sup>

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<sup>857</sup> *The Saint Paul and Pioneer Press*, 21 December 1880

<sup>858</sup> Marie Burke, Washington Select Death Certificates, date of death; 8 November 1956 in Seattle, King, Washington FHL File #2033655, Reference ID 20560

<sup>859</sup> Ancestry.com U.S. Federal census, 1920, 1930, 1940 [database on-line];The National Archives at St. Louis, Missouri; State Headquarters; Washington; Record Group Name: Records of the Selective Service System;

In 1940 the Burkes home had increased in value to \$5,500 which was the average value of homes in this area. It is unclear if the Burkes moved their residence as the previous address was noted as Prospect Street but by 1940 their address is noted as Prospect Avenue but maps of Seattle do not easily identify Prospect Avenue. As the value of the homes in the area was more uniform it would suggest the family moved residence or that the earlier valuation was inaccurate. Joseph and Marie were 59 years of age in 1940, Joseph remained employed by the Northern Pacific Railway as an engineer, for 48 weeks of work he was paid \$2,185 which when compared to other earnings noted earlier, was a good wage. His length of service with one company was due in part to a culture of regular and long-term employment. The Northern Pacific Railway was completed by 1883 and operated from Minnesota to the Pacific Coast. During the early years of railroad construction, railway workers worked under very poor conditions with substandard pay. The Brotherhood of Railroad Brakemen was formed in New York in 1883 to represent the interest of brakemen. In 1889 the union expanded their remit and opened their membership to all railroad workers. The expansion further brought about a change in name to the Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen. The union incorporated into the United Transportation Union in 1969 ensuring it became a part of the largest railroad union in North America. A stable workplace with union representation may have secured Joseph's employment for the many years. Joseph and Marie both died in 1956 aged 76 years, their shared grave is located in Evergreen Cemetery in Washington.<sup>860</sup>

The records available of the Bourke family have provided a picture of the lives of their sons and although the records are limited they raise a number of questions. Coleman and Margaret Bourke resided in St Paul in 1895; the many reasons why they cannot be found after this date may include death or because they were in transition at the time the record was created. Their youngest children left Minnesota for Washington and it may have led Coleman and Margaret to follow as, unlike the west of Ireland where the Bourkes had close community and generational ties, this was not the case in the city of St Paul. It is not known with certainty why the Burke sons went west to Washington but just as many had before them, they may have migrated for employment opportunities. Further, their migrations may have been family led in that older siblings may have migrated west and others followed. Coal and ore mining along with gold prospecting attracted settlers to Whatcom in the second half

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Record Group Number: 147; Archive Number: 563992; Box Number 4. Ancestry.com *U.S. World War II Draft Registration Cards, 1942*

<sup>860</sup> Ancestry.com U.S. Federal census 1940 [database on-line]; Washington Select Death Certificates, Joseph Francis Burke 15 December 1956; FHL#2033656 Reference ID 22776; Marie Burke, Washington Select Death Certificates, date of death; 8 November 1956 in Seattle, King, Washington FHL File #2033655, Reference ID 20560

of the nineteenth century. In the 1880s mills were established at Whatcom Creek and over the future decades more than 45 shingle mills and 17 sawmills were established in the region.<sup>861</sup> Employment with the railroad may have taken Coleman junior and his brother Joseph to Washington. Patrick Burke married in Butte Montana which may have been where he met his wife or perhaps where his wife last lived prior to marrying Patrick. Butte in Silver Bow County, Montana, was home to the Anaconda Copper Mining Company and by the early twentieth century was the largest copper producing mine in the world. The demand for increased production led to the employment of great numbers of unskilled migrants. Men died or were crippled when they fell down shafts and when they worked under unstable rock that collapsed without warning. Dynamite used by unskilled men often maimed or killed men while chronic respiratory illnesses ensured many miners died a slower death.

## 7. John and Bridget Grealish

John and Bridget Grealish did not provide testimony to the Graceville Committee in December 1880 which could imply the family left prior to the difficulties caused by the onset of winter or that the family never went to Graceville. This latter possibility must be considered since it has been concluded that this may have occurred with the Bourke family. The shipping list indicated the eldest children of the Grealish family were female and of age to be employed. John Ireland found employment for 90 young people and a number of the Grealish daughters may have supported their family by availing of employment in the city. Also, success on the prairies was consistent with the number of persons in a family available to work the land. John Grealish was 45 years of age when he arrived in Minnesota and both his sons were under ten years of age and not old enough to be of any real practical assistance on the homestead.

A number of anomalies are evident on the shipping list; the 1885 census indicated the family resided in ward 4 in St Paul but the surname Greylish was provided and the ages of a number of children are not accurate. Margaret aged 13 on the shipping list, and Nanny who was one in 1880 do not appear on the census of 1885. This could mean that additional people travelled with the family so as to enable these people to leave Ireland. Perhaps accident or poor health could have led to the infant's death and the eldest daughter was employed and

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<sup>861</sup> [http://www.historylink.org/index.cfm?DisplayPage=output.cfm&file\\_id=7327](http://www.historylink.org/index.cfm?DisplayPage=output.cfm&file_id=7327)

recorded at a different location. As noted earlier, incorrect information could also imply poor literacy levels or could indicate the family were Irish speakers who depended upon the accuracy of the census taker. It may have been a combination of poor language and literacy skills along with a challenging brogue or an indifferent census taker that caused the anomalies. Moreover, it must be remembered it was common to have variations in names in Ireland as well as the U.S. at this time too.

Table 1 highlights the many inaccuracies which are important to note: for example, Julia aged 3 on the shipping list married in 1890; so, if the age on the shipping list was correct, it would mean Julia was married and conceived her first child at 13 years of age. Regardless of the age differences it would appear Julia who was listed independently of her family on the 1900 census was married and had two children by that time. She married in 1889 and gave birth to her first child in 1891, when, according to the census of 1885 and later censuses, she would have been 15 which was also very young to marry and give birth.

Table 1: Age Anomalies of Grealish Family

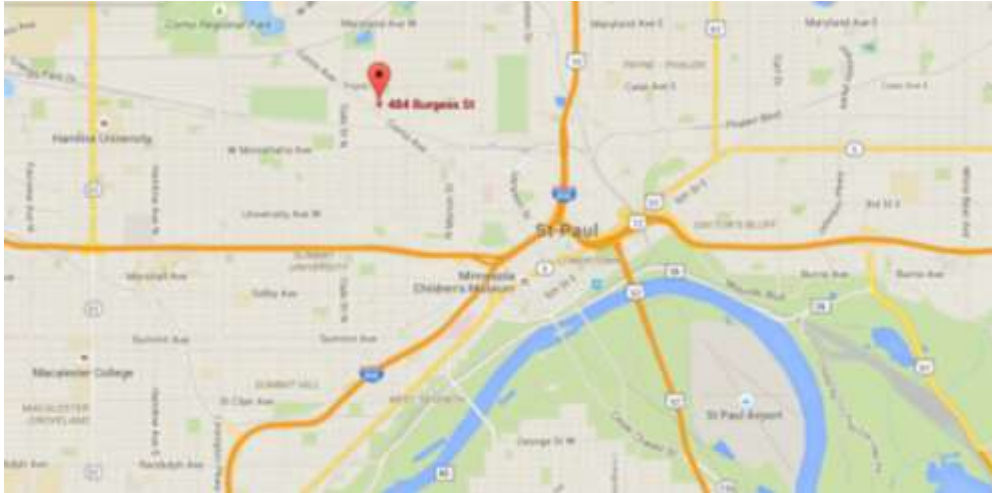
Name on Shipping List	Age in 1880	Age Census 1885	Age Census 1895
John	Grealish 45	Greylish 50	60
Bridget	45	49	55
Margaret	Margaret 21	Mary 23	---
Bridget	19	21	---
Honor	Honor 15	Hannah 17	---
Margaret	13	---	---
Sarah	10	14	21
John	7	13	---
Patrick	5	12	22
Julia	3	10	---
Nanny	1	---	---

John Grealish Snr was not working in 1895; his son John worked as a labourer and was identified in the census as the head of the household. As previously noted labouring work was seasonal and labourers were required to earn sufficient wage over a maximum eight month period and in turn had ensure it lasted for 12 months. The precarious existence of a labourer in the west of Ireland was replicated in the Mid-West but with one important distinction, for the most part other employment could be found. The location of the family in 1895 was 484 Burgess St as noted by figure 5. Once more, this location is not in close proximity to the river, so the location cannot be identified as the Connemara Patch. By 1900 the residence on Burgess St was rented to another Irish family who had immigrated to St Paul



in 1885. Attempts to locate John and his wife Bridget after 1895 have not been successful. It is possible by this time they had died or had relocated.

Figure 5: Location of Grealish Family 1895<sup>862</sup>



#### *John Grealish – John Grealish*

A number of the children of John and Bridget were discovered in later census which may explain why the family were no longer to be found at Burgess St in 1900. John Grealish, son of John and Bridget married Mary E. McGowan in Boston in October 1897. He was 25 and his spouse was 18. John worked as a housesmith which was an iron worker who assisted in building the steel skeleton or other steelwork used in high-rise buildings. It was difficult to accurately identify John and Mary beyond their marriage record: once more it must be assumed records do exist but alterations occur with names, ages and/or locations have made them difficult to locate and confirm accurately.

#### *John Grealish – Julia Grealish*

As stated earlier in this chapter, male offspring are more easily identified when researching genealogies. However in this particular case, one of the younger female Grealish siblings was identified with the assistance of a family tree found online. In turn, the second and youngest male of the family, Patrick, was identified via the research of his sister Julia

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<sup>862</sup><https://www.google.ie/maps/place/484+Burgess+St,+St+Paul,+MN+55117,+USA/@44.954266,-93.1189512,13z/data=!4m2!3m1!1s0x52b32ac7b8e397cb:0x2aa4d27f294bc3a0>

who married Charles G. Gauthier in 1889.<sup>863</sup> Charles was born in Wisconsin, his father was French Canadian and his mother was also born in Wisconsin. As a Native American, he was raised and later returned to live at the Indian Village in Flambeau, Wisconsin.<sup>864</sup> The Ojibwe (Chippewa) peoples were among the original inhabitants of Wisconsin and were joined by French and English fur traders in the 1600s. A permanent Chippewa settlement was found at Lac du Flambeau by the mid 1700s. For the purposes of this particular study the narrative is of interest as the interaction between different cultures is evident. The marginalisation of minority groups as occurred along the East Coast of America where Irish men married Irish women was not evident in the Mid-West. A young man of French Canadian and Native American heritage had a relationship and married a young Irish immigrant and when that relationship ended he married a Swedish native and had a second family.

The failure of Julia's marriage to Charles Gauthier may be the result of any number of personal difficulties. By age 21 Julia was the mother of two small children, her son Frank was born in 1891 and his sister Mamie was born in 1893.<sup>865</sup> Charles was working as a confectioner and this would seem to have been the only income the family earned at this time. In 1900 Charles worked fulltime as a cook but did not earn sufficient wage to purchase a home. Julia stayed at home to raise their children, Frank was nine and Mamie was seven and both attended school.<sup>866</sup>

By 1902 the marriage had ended and Julia had married a second time to Chester Thurson. The age difference between Julia and her second husband was much less than that of Charles and Julia. Chester was 39 years old in 1910 and Julia was four years younger than him. Chester worked as a bartender and Frank, Julia's son, worked as an electrician for a street car company. Julia, similar to other of Nugent's immigrants had moved west from St Paul to Vancouver in Clark County in Washington by 1910, the city directories of 1916-17 give their address as 508 Alder. The city directory of 1911 indicated Frank worked as a lineman for the railway and Mamie was a mangler at Elite Laundry. A mangler was

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<sup>863</sup> Julie Gralish married Charles Gokey (Gauthier) in St Paul 4 September 1889, Minnesota Marriage Index File # 1314516 *FamilySearch*; Many of the research documents such as census records have the name Gauthier entered as a variant of this name with the displacement of the last two letters identifying the name as Gauthire. But marriage and subsequent birth records along with the more common usage of the name of Gauthier in the location where Charles was born suggests his name is spelt as Gauthier.

<sup>864</sup> Ancestry.com, 1920 U.S. Federal Census, St Paul Minnesota [database on-line]; The 1920 census indicated Charles Gautier was working as an interpreter for the U.S. Indian Service. By correlating parent's birth locations along with date of birth, Charles was singled out from two other persons with similar names.

<sup>865</sup> Minnesota, Births and Christenings, 1840-1980, index, *FamilySearch*  
<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:FD9J-WQD>; FHL microfilm 1,309,124; 1895 Minnesota State Census

<sup>866</sup> Ancestry.com, 1900 U.S. Federal Census, St Paul Minnesota [database on-line]

employed in wringing water from wet laundry which was physically demanding work. Commercial laundries used steam powered mangles or ironers, Mamie worked in a commercial laundry as indicated by the image below.



Julie Gauthier and fellow employees of Elite Laundry as indicated in 1911 census. Photo courtesy of Barbara Butterfield

### *John Grealish – Julia Thurson – Frank Gauthier*

According to the WWI draft registration of 1917, Frank was 26 years of age and was described as short of medium build with black hair and brown eyes. He was living in Mondak in Montana - a town synonymous with selling alcohol to the dry state of North Dakota from 1903 to 1919 when prohibition was introduced. Frank Gauthier was not alone in moving to Montana, his sister Mamie married George E. Taylor in Billings in Montana in 1916. George's parents were born in Kansas while he was born in Washington. Once more the transient nature of the population of the U.S. is evident. With both Mamie and her brother Frank in Montana in 1916-17, it can be assumed they resided between there and Washington as by 1920 Mamie and her family resided once more in Washington with Chester Thurston.<sup>867</sup> Julia died young in 1919 while still in her early forties; Julia's death record

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<sup>867</sup> *Montana, County Marriages, 1865-1950*, Ancestry.com, Provo, UT, USA Operations, Inc., 2014,

stated her brother Patrick Grealish resided with her but this merely records his existence as no further documentation was discovered to indicate how and where he lived.<sup>868</sup> The draft registration card for Frank Gauthier is the final document available and as such his lineage ends too.

*John Grealish – Julia Thurson – Mamie Taylor*

Chester Thurston, his step-daughter Mamie Taylor and her family rented a home on Main St in Vancouver city in Washington in 1920. Chester worked as a manager in a confectionery store, George worked as a labourer in a shipyard and Mamie worked outside the home as a housekeeper. Myrel, the granddaughter of Julia was aged one. In 1930 the Taylor family continue to reside in Vancouver City at 401 E 17<sup>th</sup> St. Mamie and George did not extend their family and their single daughter was 11 years old. George worked in a laundry as a marker but was earning sufficient income so that Mamie did not have to work. The family owned their home at this time. Of the 15 homes listed on the census page four were rented, two were valued at \$5,000, one was valued at \$3,500 and the Taylor home was valued at £2,500 which would appear to have been the median value of a home at this location.<sup>869</sup> Ten years later the family remained in the same home where its value remained unchanged. When the economic decline of the 1930s is considered this is not surprising. By 1940 George remained working in the laundry and earned \$1,050 for 52 weeks of work. When compared to a worker in a plywood plant who earned \$1,350 for 52 weeks work it would appear George's wage was low. In 1940 George was 48 years old and Mamie was 47. Mamie died in 1979 when she was 86 years old; her last known address was 98632 Longview, Cowlitz, Washington.<sup>870</sup>

*John Grealish – Julia Thurson – Mamie Taylor – Myrle Rondeau – Barbara Butterfield*

Mamie and George's daughter Myrle married Howard Z. Rondeau on 10 June 1939 in St James Catholic Church in Vancouver. The witnesses were Orton L. Rondeau and Dorothy

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FHL file# 1943757; The marriage record of Mamie and George was the one document which enabled this genealogy to be completed with accuracy as it was the first document to link Julia Grealish with Charles Gauthier. From this document census information was examined for Julia with her initial married name.

<sup>868</sup> Julia Grealish m Chester Thurson 1<sup>st</sup> Oct 1902 in Minneapolis Hennepin MN FHL film#1380442; Julia Thurston born 1875 died 12 Mar 1919 age 44, Vancouver, Clark, Washington residing in house Pat Grealish FHL File#1992538 ref ID 140

<sup>869</sup> R. Polk and Co. City Directory 1931, Taylor, George and Mamie, p. 225

<sup>870</sup> U.S. Social Security Index, Mamie Taylor born 8 February 1893 died January 1979, SSN# 533-66-7543

Olsen. It is assumed Orton and Howard were related to one another.<sup>871</sup> Howard was born in Carthage in Jefferson County in New York in 1918. His parents were Henry Rondeau and Jennie Carey. Howard enlisted at Portland Airbase in the air corps in March 1942 during World War II. Voluntary enlistment was effective immediately upon the U.S. declaring war on Japan on 8 December 1941 following the military strike by the Imperial Japanese Navy on the U.S. naval base at Pearl Harbour. But even before Pearl harbour Congress had passed the Selective Training and Service Act in 1940, creating America's first peacetime military conscription program. Enlistment was for the duration of the war. In civilian life Howard was employed as a draftsman and had attended four years of high school. In 1942 he resided in Clark County in Washington with his wife Myrle.<sup>872</sup>



George Thurston with Julie, Frank and Mamie. Photo courtesy of Barbara Butterfield

According to the obituary of Howard Rondeau he served as a B-26 flight instructor and combat pilot in the Army Air Force 344th Bomb Group. This distinguished group had a combat record during World War II that included leading the bomber command formations on D-Day. The unit further supported British Forces at Caen. After V-E Day the group was moved to Schlessheim in Germany for occupation duty. Howard's awards included Battle Stars, Purple Hearts and Distinguished Flying Crosses. He retired from the Air Force Reserve

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<sup>871</sup> Certificate of Marriage, Washington, Reference#eaclkmca2118

<sup>872</sup> Electronic Army Serial Number Merged File, 1938-1946; ARC:1263923. *U.S. World War II Army Enlistment Records, 1938-1946* [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations Inc, 20005

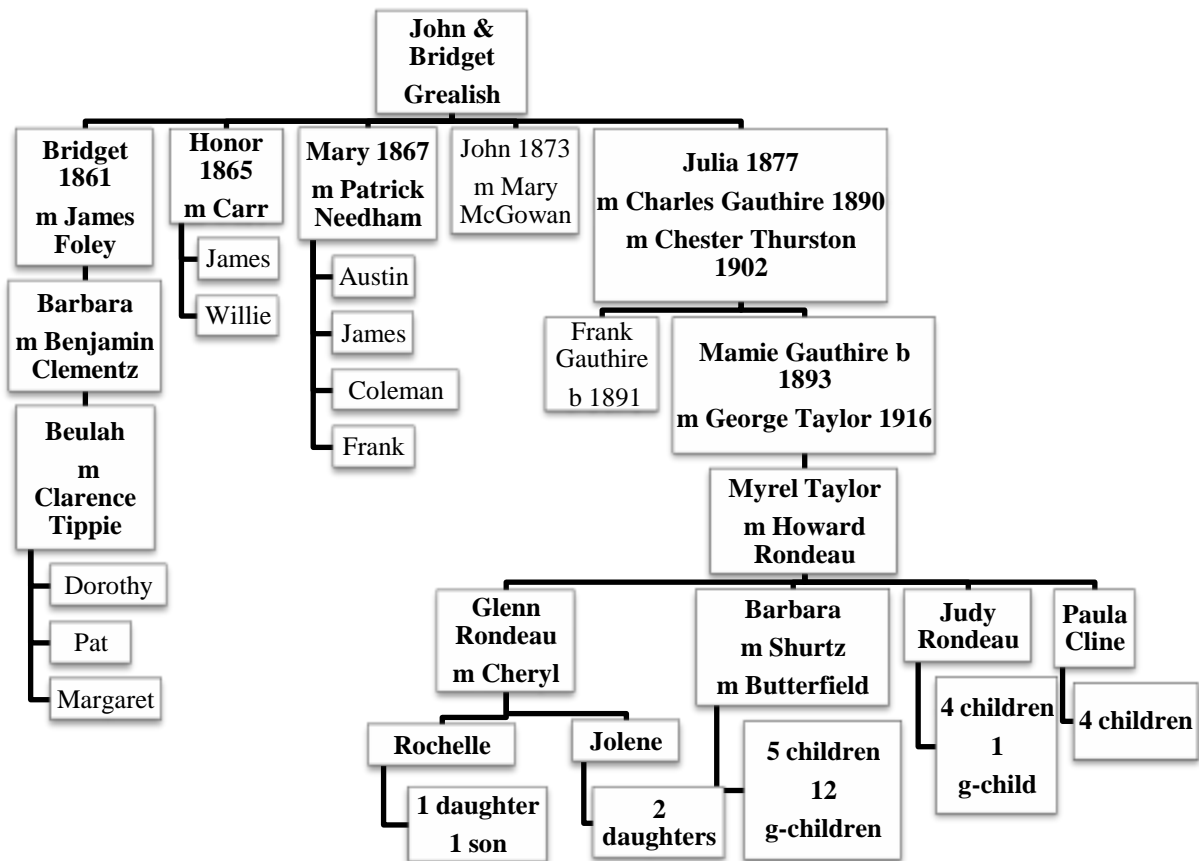
as a Lieutenant Colonel. Howard Rondeau died in December 2005 in Coos County in Oregon at the age of 87. Myrle had preceded him in death in 1973 in Oregon. Howard and Myrle had moved to the Oregon Coast in 1964 where Howard designed and built two homes. Howard also worked as an engineer and as a supervisor at the Crown-Zellerbach paper mill in Camas. He also worked at the International Paper Corporation facilities in Gardiner and Portland. After retiring, Howard worked with the International Executive Service Corps on assignment in Cairo, Egypt. He was a member of the Elks, the Knights of Columbus lodges and the Rotary Club. Howard's obituary indicated his children included Glenn Rondeau of Keizer, Barbara Butterfield of Harriman Utah, Judy Rodneau of El Paso Texas and Paula Cline of Reedsport.<sup>873</sup>



Meryl M. Taylor. Photo courtesy of Barbara Butterfield

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<sup>873</sup> <http://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=gr&GRid=12692897&ref=acom>; Myrle Eve Rondeau died 19 May 1973 in Douglas Oregon; born August 1918 (Oregon Death Index, 1903-1998) *FamilySearch*



This researcher spoke with Glenn Rodneau in June 2015 who confirmed his family genealogy. The family expressed their surprise at being of interest to an Irish researcher. Glenn's sister Barbara Butterfield is a member of the Mormon Church and lives in the greater Salt Lake City, Utah area and assists at the Family Search Library of the Mormon Church in Riverton, Utah. This researcher contacted Barbara and in turn she assisted in adding more details of the Grealish family. Bridget who was born in 1861 married James Foley and had seven children; one of them was Barbara who married Harry Benjamin Clementz. In turn, they had two children; one was called Beulah who married Clarence Tippie with whom she had three daughters, Dorothy, Pat and Margaret. According to Barbara Butterfield her parents, 'would take us to Tacoma, Washington to visit our cousins up there'. Julie's life was one filled with family as it appears most of the Grealish siblings moved west to Washington from Minnesota. Another Grealish daughter, Honora born in 1865, married a man with the last name of Carr and had two sons; James and Willie. Nothing further was known of this family. Mary who was born in 1867 married Patrick Needham and they had four children, Austin William, James, Coleman Stephen, and Frank Lawrence. This family was also difficult to trace any further.



Barbara's brother Glenn and his wife Cheryl had two daughters; Rochelle is married and has one son and one daughter. Jolene is also married and has two daughters. Glenn retired from his position as a safety director at a paper mills. Barbara's sister Judy has three daughters, one son and has eight grandchildren. Paula, another sister, had 4 children and 1 grandchild. Paula spent five years in Ethiopia teaching special education at an International school and while she was there she adopted two of her four children. At the time of writing Paula was moving to the Dominican Republic to teach.

## 8. James O'Brien and Bartholomew McDonough

Figure 6: Place of Birth O'Brien Family

Shipping List	Birth	<i>CLDS FamilySearch</i>		
James O'Brien	1835			
Wife	1842	Honor Walsh		
Barbara	1860	-----		
Patrick	1863	2 March	1864	Lettermore
Peter	1865	-----		
Martin	1867	11 November	1868	Lettermore
Ann	1872	30 November	1870	Lettermore
Stephen	1873	07 February	1873	Lettermore
James	1874	01 September	1875	Lettermore

As noted earlier, one of the more excellent on-line sites available are the collections and records of the Church of the Latter Day Saints (CLDS) which are also recognised by the name *FamilySearch*. By cross referencing the shipping list with *FamilySearch* records the birth dates and location of births were discovered of the O'Brien family along with the name of James O'Brien's wife which was Honor Walsh. Discovering additional pieces of information assists with further identifications as it is often the case with genealogy research that records are discovered but cannot be confirmed.<sup>874</sup> As has been seen with so many of the other recorded entries on the shipping list the information that was provided was inaccurate. The birth years for some of the O'Brien family were incorrect and additional people were

<sup>874</sup> "Ireland Births and Baptisms, 1620-1881," index, *FamilySearch*, Stephen O'Brien, 07 Feb 1873; <https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:FP3F-QBC>, citing Lettermon, Galway, Ireland, reference p512 r50; FHL microfilm 255,871; James O'Brien, 01 Sep 1875, (<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:FG8M-P5L>) citing Galway, Ireland, reference v 14-1 p403; FHL microfilm 255,937; James O'Brien in entry for Martin O'Brien, 11 Nov 1868; (<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:FPHN-N5V>) Citing Galway, Ireland, reference v 19-1 p450 FHL microfilm 101,178; James O'Brien in entry for Anne O'Brien, 30 Nov 1870 (<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:F5BF-7ZH>) citing Galway, Ireland, reference; FHL microfilm 101,218; James O'Brein in entry for Patrick O'Brien 02 Mar 1864 (<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:F518-0386>) Lettermore District, Galway, Ireland, reference; FHL microfilm 101,083



added to the family for immigration purposes. Figure 6 highlights the disparities. The records of the O'Brien siblings were easily discovered but no records existed for Barbara or Peter suggesting they may have a different birth name. Discovering the date of birth of the immigrants also provided the place of birth which for this study is important as it may have further significance such as providing more answers why people choose to leave. Unlike the Gallagher family who moved to various locations in south Mayo as noted by their children's births, the O'Briens remained in Lettermore and it can be assumed the family originated in Lettermore.

James O'Brien and his family relocated to Minneapolis from Graceville and were located in the 1885 state census which includes part of ward 5 and wards 6-8.<sup>875</sup> This area of Hennepin County was a part of the city of Minneapolis. Age discrepancies can introduce doubt as to the family's identity but matching names and age difference between children assisted in confirming this family. James O'Brien was aged 60 in 1885 which implies the age is incorrect or that he falsified his age on the shipping list so as not to seem too old to avail of Nugent's scheme. It would seem at the outset that this family could have been capable of building a life as farmers in Graceville particularly when you consider the age given by the patriarch and the fact he had a number of sons who were of an age to assist with farm labour. But when the location they left is taken into account is it more understandable that this family did not have had the experience required to farm in Minnesota. Lettermore can be described as having extremely poor land where rocks protrude the earth at all points. Lettermore was further an island and the extremes of wind in this salty environment would have meant those who resided in Lettermore depended upon other means to survive such as fishing, selling eggs or working as seasonal labourers in east Galway.

The testimony provided to the Graceville Committee in December 1880 indicated that O'Brien's house was shingled which was important as the unshingled houses led to difficulties in freezing temperatures. Despite having a daughter working in St Paul and having earned money as a labourer James complained that Father Ryan had money belonging to him and that Ryan had spoken to him harshly. Although Ryan denied speaking unkindly to O'Brien it is clear that the relationship had broken down by this time. James O'Brien's wife was ill and the committee acknowledged the family required more food as the children looked delicate.<sup>876</sup> The O'Brien family most likely felt their lives could only improve by

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<sup>875</sup> 1885 Minnesota, Territorial and State Censuses, St Paul MN, MHS Microfilm. Reels 1-47 and 107-164. Ancestry.com database on-line

<sup>876</sup> *Saint Paul and Minneapolis Pioneer Press*, 21 December 1880

leaving Graceville for the cities, with the matriarch of the family unwell, James would have needed the assistance of the older members of his family. Also the cash income earned in the city could have been attractive, and at least from James' point of view, there was no requirement in the city to hand over his income to Ryan or anyone else.

In examining the O'Brien family that left Graceville for Minneapolis it was of interest to note that the family residing next to James O'Brien in 1885 was that of Peter O'Brien who along with his family had immigrated to Minneapolis in 1884. It is possible these families were related as within the diverse society that existed in the cities in the 1880s it was most unlikely that an immediate neighbour was from the same country and shared the same name. Of further note are the additional children in James O'Brien's household by 1885; Maggie was born in 1883 and Mary was born a year later. Although the couple continued to have more children they also continued to support their older children. Patrick who was 21 in 1885 had married Kate who was 17 and both resided with Patrick's parents. As was seen with Julia Grealish, young people from the far west of Ireland who had immigrated to America continued to marry and give birth at a young age.

The censuses of 1885 and 1895 indicated two families by the name of McDonna resided close to the O'Brien family on Cooper St S. One of the McDonna families was identified as Nugent's immigrants with their name spelt as McDonough on the shipping list. The two McDonna families were most likely to have been related to one another as the similar spelling suggests. The second McDonna family had immigrated after 1880. As was seen previously a small cluster of families resided close to one another in St Paul but on further investigation this was not the case in Minneapolis. In examining three pages of census entries before and after the entries for O'Brien and McDonna, of a total of 35 addresses all of which housed immigrant families, three homes contained Swedish immigrants and 28 homes contained immigrants from Austria. The only Irish families present were the O'Briens and the McDonnas. Analysis of the McDonough family will follow the study of the O'Brien family. An area called Cooper exists in Minneapolis which is close to the Mississippi River that divides St Paul and Minneapolis but not close to ward six where the census indicated the O'Briens and McDonoughs lived.

A decade later in the 1890s the extended O'Brien family continued to live together. Patrick and Kate had left the home but Stephen and his family resided with James and

Honor.<sup>877</sup> James and his sons Martin and Stephen were all employed as labourers, which was a precarious line of employment. The O'Briens worked the least hours and earned the least pay when compared to other labourers who lived in the same neighbourhood. By June 1890 the men had only been employed for two months of the year and could not have sustained their families which may in turn provide answers as to why the three generations lived in the one household. By 1900 Margaret and Mary continued to live with their parents and both worked in a presser factory. The home was shared with Peter O'Brien who had immigrated in 1882 and James Griffin who had immigrated in 1892. Both men worked as day labourers and the shared household provided affordable accommodation for the single men and also supplemented the family income.

In 1910 James O'Brien who was 84 years old resided at the same address on Cooper St. He continued to work and was in full time employment as a street worker. James had purchased his home and his mortgage payment may explain his need to continue working so late in life. James and Honor supported their extended family throughout their lives, in their latter decades their home was shared with their 13 year old nephew, Patrick Griffin and their seven year old grandson George Gotchian. As the names were the same, it may be assumed James and Patrick Griffin were related to one another. The fact that extended family members followed the immigration path taken by the O'Briens in 1880 suggests the information that travelled back to the far west of Ireland, either by personal letters or from stories recalled by others who knew the O'Briens spoke positively of their immigration experience. Records for James and Honor were not found after 1910 and it can be assumed they both had died by 1920.

#### *James O'Brien – James O'Brien – Edward James O'Brien*

By 1900 James who was born in 1874 and named after his father, had married Kate and had one son who was also called James. Edward James O'Brien was born 10 September 1899 in Minneapolis.<sup>878</sup> James and Kate rented their home on 19<sup>th</sup> Ave S in the sixth ward in Minneapolis. In 1920 their son was not recorded with them and may have died or was residing with family members and not available for census records. Further searches for this family beyond 1920 were not successful which could suggest the family migrated.

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<sup>877</sup> 1895 Minnesota, Territorial and State Censuses, St Paul MN, MHS Microfilm. Reels 1-47 and 107-164. Ancestry.com database on-line

<sup>878</sup> Minnesota, Births and Christenings, 1840-1980, index, *FamilySearch* (<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:FDSX-TJL: Edward James O'Brien 10 Sept 1899; citing Minneapolis, Hennepin, Minnesota, reference; FHL microfilm 1,498,848>)

*James O'Brien – Stephen O'Brien – Mary O'Brien*

In 1895 Stephen along with his wife Emilia, resided with James and Honor O'Brien in Minneapolis. Emilia O'Brien was born in 1875 and had emigrated as a young child from Norway to Minnesota in 1880. The climate of the upper Mid-West was similar to that of Norway and many Norwegians took the opportunity to avail of land which was sold cheaply by the government following the removal of the indigenous peoples in the 1860s. Emilia married Stephen in 1893 and gave birth to her first child a year later. Mary O'Brien was born on 26 January 1894.<sup>879</sup> By 1900 Stephen and his wife had left the extended O'Brien family household but continued to rent in Minneapolis. By this time his family had expanded and Emilia had given birth to four daughters. Mary was aged six, Nora was four, Margaret was three and Myrtle was one year old.<sup>880</sup> Stephen was working in the flour mills as a nailer. By early 1900s Minneapolis had become the primary wheat market of the world where three corporations controlled 97 per cent of the nation's flour production. These companies became household names; General Mills, Pillsbury and the Standard Milling Company. The history of the flour mills of Minneapolis was dominated by the power struggle between mill bosses and employees who sought better pay and conditions. In 1903, close to 1,500 Washburn Crosby Company employees walked out past a notice that 'all employees of this mill leaving their positions are discharged and are no longer in the employ of the company'. According to Millikan, the founders of the city of Minneapolis spent vast amounts of money to control the 'laws, courts, police and to spy on and root out any threat to their domination of industry. They made Minneapolis into a city where the vast majority (workers) struggled to survive while the mill owners basked in a life of luxury'.<sup>881</sup> Stephen continued to work at the flour mills until his death in 1911. As the Minneapolis Mills were known to dismiss those who attempted to organise and those who were involved in union leadership it can be assumed Stephen continued to work and abide by the terms and conditions that satisfied Mill bosses and the Citizens Alliance. Stephen died young aged 37 years old; he was employed as a packer in the mills. His life, as was his father's, was one of hard work as labourers, street

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<sup>879</sup> Minnesota, Births and Christenings, 1840-1980, index, FamilySearch (<https://familysearch.org/ark:61903/1:1:FDSJ-1MX>) Stephen O'Brien in entry for Mary O'Brien, 26 Jan 1894; citing Minneapolis, Hennepin, Minnesota, reference; FHL microfilm 1,498,831

<sup>880</sup> Minnesota, Births and Christenings, 1840-1980, index, FamilySearch (<https://familysearch.org/ark:61903/1:1:FDS6-GNG>) Stephen O'Brien in entry for Bridget Myrtle O'Brien, 04 Apr 1899; citing Minneapolis, Hennepin, Minnesota, reference; FHL microfilm 1,498,846

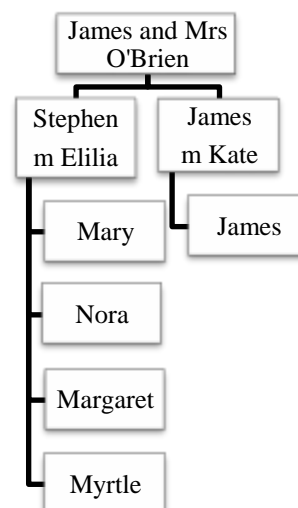
<sup>881</sup> Millikan William, *A Union Against Unions: The Minneapolis Citizens Alliance and Its Fight Against Organized Labor, 1903-1947* (Minnesota Historical Society, 2001), p.3; *Where's the Working Class at the Mill City Museum?* <http://www.minnesotahistory.net/wptest/?p=3431>

workers and mill packers.<sup>882</sup> Stephen's parents, James and Honor, were alive in 1910 but as the dates of their deaths are unknown it is possible they were alive when their son Stephen died.

An irregularity was noted in the 1910 census entry for Stephen O'Brien and his family.<sup>883</sup> The standard census page indicated Stephen resided with his family however the supplementary record showed Emilia as head of the family without Stephen. His death was not recorded until 1911 which may suggest Stephen was hospitalised at the date of the recording of the census and died later leading to an updated entry in the supplementary section of the census. Regardless of the date of Stephen's death, the loss of the primary income earner left his family facing hardship. Emilia and her daughter Mary were employed in low paid employment; Emilia worked for various households as a washer woman and Mary worked making boxes in a factory. The family was further supported by rent paid by seven male lodgers. Although no evidence suggests the household circumstances were complicated it must be assumed that life was difficult for Emilia as a single parent of four young daughters in a household that included a large number of young males. Tracing this family beyond the 1910 census was difficult as Emilia and her daughters may have married which would have led to their names being changed. Without any further information this particular genealogy ended at this point. Figure 7 indicated the family as recorded on the shipping list along with those born after 1880.

Figure 7: Austrian Shipping List 1880

James	1835
Mrs O'Brien	1842
Barbara	1860
Patrick	1863
Peter	1865
Martin	1867
Ann	1872
<b>Stephen</b>	<b>1873</b>
<b>James</b>	<b>1874</b>
Maggie	1883 Born in MN
Mary	1884 Born in MN



<sup>882</sup> Minnesota, Deaths and Burials, 1835-1990, index, *FamilySearch* (<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:FD9L-9HR>), Stephen O'Brien, 20 July 1911; citing Minneapolis, Hennepin, Minnesota, reference cn 18196; FHL microfilm 2,138,940

<sup>883</sup> 1910 Census: Minneapolis Ward 6, Hennepin, Minnesota; Roll: T624\_702; Pages: 4B and 23A, Enumeration District: 0109; FHL microfilm:1374715

## 9. Bartholomew and Nanny McDonough

As noted earlier the McDonough family were located due to the detection of the O'Brien family. The discovery of this family via electronic search is rendered difficult as the spelling of the name McDonough had changed and many of the first names were recorded as variations of the names on the shipping list. In his testimony to the Graceville committee Bartholomew McDonough stated he had no complaints about Father Ryan even though his daughter's feet were badly frozen while walking from the homestead to Graceville. This family, unlike others, did not indicate they spoke Irish so it is assumed they spoke English, however, it cannot be assumed they were literate.<sup>884</sup> Once more a heavy accent provides a reason for inaccurate recording of names, but those from Norway, Sweden and Austria, Bartholomew's neighbours, must also have had discernable accents. By 1885 most of the McDonough children remained with their parents with the exception of the eldest daughter Bridget who was 21 years old at this time and was most likely employed outside the home and living elsewhere or was married and resided with her husband. Ten years later the family had reduced further, neither Anna nor Margaret then resided at Cooper St. The family name changed once more to Donna and Coleman continued to be referred to as Cola. This particular abbreviation of the name Coleman or Colman was not unusual, in the far west of Ireland, Cólí or Colie were variations of Coleman.

The 1895 census provided the name of Mrs McDonough as Nappy while Bartholomew was identified as Bartley. The males of the family worked as labourers but had only worked for six months of the year which was to be expected when the climate of Minnesota was considered. None of the females indicated they were employed; this family could have only suffered financially with income only derived from part-time labouring positions.<sup>885</sup> By 1910 the McDonough family continued to reside close to the O'Brien family in Minneapolis. Bartholomew was employed as a street worker and Patrick, the only child that remained living with his parents, was employed as a labourer in the flour mills. The irregularities and variations with the recording of this family have made further discoveries of this family difficult and although no further generations have been recorded it would have been remiss not to document the family's existence alongside the O'Brien family.

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<sup>884</sup> 1885 Minnesota, Territorial and State Censuses, St Paul MN, MHS Microfilm. Reels 1-47 and 107-164. Ancestry.com database on-line

<sup>885</sup> 1895 Minnesota, Territorial and State Censuses, St Paul MN, MHS Microfilm. Reels 1-47 and 107-164. Ancestry.com database on-line

## 10. Patrick Flaherty

By searching for Patrick Flaherty's name in historical record databases for the year of birth provided on the shipping list along with place of birth as Galway, only one record was discovered. This record was found in the Irish Prison Registers; the prisoner was guilty of larceny.<sup>886</sup> Although the date of the document was unclear it would seem the entry is from the last of the quarterly sessions of 1880. As Nugent's immigrants departed Galway in June it would seem unlikely the prison registry entry for Patrick Flaherty was for the same individual. However as the date and description of sentence served was unclear an effort to discover more information was undertaken. With an expectation that contemporary accounts of crimes and court sessions were available in newspapers, every effort was made to discover persons of this name who lived in the west Galway region prior to June 1880. The findings were startling and may indeed provide a clearer picture as to why the immigrant families were chosen from the areas previously identified. As has already been seen, the Gallagher Family from Aughagower along with four other families, were selected to leave by Father Stephens. His claims of preferential treatment by Nugent towards members of the Irish Church Mission Society and soupers led directly to Catholic families being assisted to leave. The suggestion that this may also have been the case in Galway must be explored as the contemporary accounts for the name Patrick Flaherty revealed only one individual for the two years prior to departure. This individual was involved in a number of incidents and actions against 'soupers' and the Irish Church Mission.

In March 1879 a riot took place at Claddaghduff which led up to 30 people including a local priest, Father Rhatigan being arrested on three separate charges that included causing a riot and an affray and unlawful assembly. A month earlier Father Rhatigan had been involved in a physical altercation with Rev William Lindsey MacNeice a schoolmaster at the Church Mission schoolhouse. Rhatigan had arrived in Clifden in late 1877 and almost immediately he was involved in disputes in the locality.<sup>887</sup> Following the altercation in February 1879, the local population who were agitated by the story that Rhatigan had been almost murdered, stoned the school building and its occupants. From February 1879 onwards and as noted earlier in this study, attacks on properties belonging to the Mission Society

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<sup>886</sup> Irish Prison Registers, 1790-1924, Database with images, *findmypast* (<http://www.findmypast.com> :n.d.); citing Galway, Galway, Ireland, Galway Prison, item 6, book 1/2/12

<sup>887</sup> *Nation* 5 January 1878; *Freeman's Journal* 7 January 1878. Fr Rhatigan verbally attacked Mitchell Henry of the Kylemore estate and accused Henry of removing tenants. A large number of responses defended Henry's record in the area by denouncing Rhatigan and stating he did not know the locality.

occurred more regularly. The schoolhouses at Belleek, Ballinaboy and Rushadelish were set on fire. Protestants were stoned and over one hundred additional policemen were sent to Clifden.

Following the initial disturbances the MacNeice family was sent to Sellerna. On their way to their new location the family was attacked by local Catholics. The mob was dispersed by a local priest, Father Flannery. Those responsible were accused of riotous behaviour and sent for trial in Galway. Fathers Rhatigan and Flannery set up the Anti-jumper Defence Fund; the prisoners' were bailed; but the case was never tried. The defendants were treated as heroes among the local Catholic population. The names of individuals who were arrested and charged with riot included three males and one female with the surname King, two with the surname Coyne, two with the surname Flaherty and one individual named Edward Melia. The shipping list indicated the families of the following who travelled to Graceville; Edward Melia, John Coyne, Martin King, and Patrick Flaherty. Coincidentally, these same names were listed as among those who were arrested for the Clifden disturbances in 1879.<sup>888</sup> Although it cannot be proven to a degree of accuracy necessary to state as fact, it cannot either be discounted. Unlike all other families who were escorted by a Catholic priest to Galway, the five families from Clifden were escorted by Thomas Campbell, a friend of Nugent's and a member of the Temperance League in Westminster. Perhaps, just as Nugent responded to claims of soupierism in Mayo, he also responded to the same claims which had been made in Clifden. It is surprising that of all the areas the immigrants originated from, the immigrants from Clifden were not accompanied by a Catholic priest having had close ties since the incidents in 1879. However, not being accompanied by a priest but by a loyal companion of Nugent's prevented claims being laid against Nugent suggesting that those responsible for lawlessness were being rewarded. In a later development or indeed an unexpected twist to the narrative, it is surely beyond coincidence that Father Rhatigan was appointed the parish priest of Graceville in 1896. The *Tuam Herald* stated, 'there he is, needless to say, the same hard-working and good-working priest that he was at home gaining the same degree of regard among his well affected parishioners'. Just how remarkable it was for the families of those from Connemara, to be presented with their energetic parish priest from home, is unknown.<sup>889</sup>

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<sup>888</sup> *Freemans Journal* 18 April 1879; *Connaught Telegraph*, 19 April 1879, 5 May 1879; *Nation* 19, 26 April 1879, 28 February 1880; *Belfast Telegraph*, 19 April 1879

<sup>889</sup> *Tuam Herald* 26 September 1896, p. 2



Of the four families, Edward Melia, Patrick Flaherty, Martin King and John Coyne, sufficient information was uncovered to examine three of these families and these will be the last of Nugent's immigrants to be considered in this chapter. Edward Melia was examined earlier in this chapter but the correlating of information was challenging due to the lack of consistency with regard to name.

#### Patrick and Bridget Flaherty

A considerable amount of research material was discovered regarding the Flaherty genealogy. To understand the material more easily the histories are presented as follows; Patrick and Bridget were viewed in the first instance and, as they later resided with their son Peter, he was considered next. Peter's son Michael and Michael's extended family were in turn examined. Secondly, Patrick and Bridget's eldest daughter Mary along with the generations that followed Mary were considered. Lastly, Redmond the eldest son of Patrick and Bridget was studied along with his extended family.

When answering a question put to him by the Graceville Committee in 1880 Patrick stated he was 'thankful' to Father Ryan for his assistance and that he did not have any criticisms to offer the scheme or those who helped his family. He also stated he had received \$25 from his children who had been employed in St Paul but that as winter approached his children came to Graceville to be with their family as they could not find work. No mention at that time was given to those who offered help from Morris. The Flaherty family was residing with John Folan who he identified as Lud Folan. According to Folan he too was 'very thankful' to Ryan, he further stated the Morris men 'offered me a little pork, which I refused'.<sup>890</sup> Had these families been connected to the Clifden disturbances it would have been expected that they remained loyal to the Catholic Church and suspicious of assistance from outsiders, particularly if those outsiders were not Catholic.

<u>Shipping List</u>	<u>Age</u>
Patrick Flaherty	50
Bridget	45
<b>Mary</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>Redmond</b>	<b>20</b>
Martin	17
Patrick	15
<b>Peter</b>	<b>12</b>
Margaret	7

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<sup>890</sup> *Saint Paul and Minneapolis Pioneer Press*, 21 December 1880

Patrick Flaherty and his family left Graceville and relocated to ward 2 in St Paul. By 1885 Mary had left the family but the remaining children resided in the family home. Twenty five years later in 1910 most of the Flaherty children had relocated or migrated and Patrick and his wife Bridget lived with their son Peter on E 3<sup>rd</sup> St in St Paul. Peter had married his wife Cecelia in 1894; by 1910 Peter and Cecelia had five daughters and two sons. Patrick was retired and his son Peter worked as an inspector for the railroad company. Both Patrick and Bridget lived with their extended family until their deaths. Bridget died at almost 80 years of age in October 1914. Her husband Patrick died soon after in December 1914, at over 80 years of age.<sup>891</sup>

#### *Patrick Flaherty – Peter Flaherty*

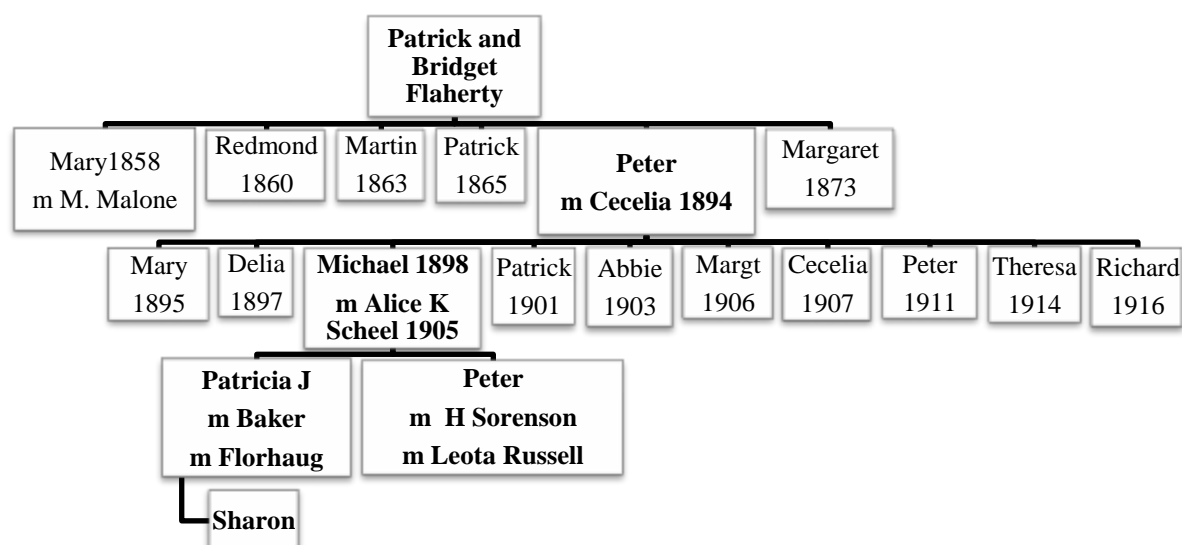
By 1920 Peter and Cecelia Flaherty's family had expanded to ten children. Their eldest daughter, Mary worked as an operator for a phone company. Two of their eldest sons, Michael and Peter also worked for the railway. Michael aged 21 worked as a checker and Patrick aged 18 worked as a locomotive fireman. Their father continued to work as a car inspector for the railway. By 1930 Peter's older children had left the family; of the six children who remained, Cecilia and Abbey worked as operators at a paper manufacturers. Margaret who was identified as Loraine worked as a stenographer for general insurance. As noted previously the family home was owned and had a value of \$3,000 which was similar to other homes owned in this area although it should be noted the majority of homes were rented. The St Paul City Directories indicated Peter and his wife resided at the same address, 887 E 3<sup>rd</sup> St for a number of decades. The 1935 City Directory indicated Peter had died and his widow Cecelia moved to 858 E 4<sup>th</sup> St.<sup>892</sup> By 1940 Cecelia continued to share her home with two of her daughters and one son.

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<sup>891</sup> *Ancestry.com*. 1885 Minnesota, Territorial and State Censuses, 1849-1905 [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations Inc, 2007; 1900 Census St Paul Ward 2, Ramsey, Minnesota; Roll: 783; page 11A; Enumeration District: 0077; FHL microfilm: 1240783; 1910 Census St Paul Ward 2, Ramsey, Minnesota; Roll: T624\_716; Page 5B; Enumeration District: 0047; FHL microfilm: 1374729; Bridget Flaherty death 14 October 1914 in Ramsey MN file# 023407 record # 153706 Minnesota Death Index. Patrick Flaherty death 5 December 1914 File # 023803 record # 156882 Minnesota Death Index

<sup>892</sup> 1920 Census St Paul Ward 2, Ramsey, Minnesota; Roll: T625\_852; Page 10A; Enumeration District: 32; Image 922; 1930 Census, St Paul Ramsey, Minnesota; Roll: 1116; Page: 17B; Enumeration District: 0022; Image: 290.0; FHL microfilm: 2340851; St Paul City Directories, 1928, 1931, 1935, 1914 (R.L. Polk and Co's); Minnesota, Deaths and Burials, 1835-1990, Database, *FamilySearch*(<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:FDDJ-TF3>) Peter J Flaherty, 27 Jan 1935, citing Saint Paul, Ramsey, Minnesota, reference cn 23340; FHL microfilm 2,242,372

## Peter Flaherty Genealogy



### *Patrick Flaherty – Peter Flaherty – Michael Flaherty*

As already noted Peter and Cecelia had ten children. Their eldest son, Michael Thomas, was born in 1898 and worked for the railway in 1910. His WWI draft registration card described him as tall, slender with blue eyes and brown hair. Michael married Alice K. Scheel in 1925. Alice had been born in Minnesota and had lived on a farm in Oakdale in Washington County in Minnesota prior to marrying Michael. Both her parents were of German ancestry but her mother had been born in New York. Her father's native language was German and he had immigrated to the U.S. in 1881. Along with being a farmer, Alice's father was a carpenter who built homes. In 1930, Michael and Alice rented their home at 344 Hope St.; Michael worked as a truck driver for the General Transfer Company. Michael's eldest daughter Patricia was born in 1934 and her brother Peter was born a year later. By 1940 Michael continued to work as a truck driver. The family had moved residence but continued to rent, their home address in 1940 was in the Harvester and Plum Vicinity of New Canada in Minnesota. Michael had worked 52 weeks in 1939 and his annual income was \$1,600. Michael Flaherty died in April 1978 when he was 80 years of age; his last address was 55119 Saint Paul. He wife died in 1987, her last known residence was 55109 Saint Paul. Both Michael and Alice were buried in Oakdale Minnesota.<sup>893</sup>

<sup>893</sup>Minnesota, Birth Index, 1935-2002, Database, *FamilySearch* (<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:VCXD-SY3>), Patricia Josephine Flaherty in entry for Baby Girl Baker, 01 Jul 1955; from "Minnesota Birth Index, 1935-2002," database, Ancestry (<http://www.ancestry.com> : 2004); citing Ramsey, Minnesota, United States, Minnesota Department of Health, Minneapolis.; Ancestry.com *U.S. World War I Draft Registration Cards, 1917-1918* [database on-line] Provo, UT, USA: Registration State:

*Patrick Flaherty – Peter Flaherty – Michael Flaherty – Patricia Florhaug – Sharon Florhaug*

Patricia J Flaherty married Robert Baker and gave birth to a daughter in 1955. Patricia married a second time to Vergil M Florhaug and had a daughter Sharon however it is not clear if this is the same daughter or a second daughter. Vergil was a Sergeant in the U.S. Army and fought in the Korean War from 1950-52. Patricia and Vergil lived on 9<sup>th</sup> Ave E in St Paul in 2000. Vergil died in 2002 and Patricia died in 2006.<sup>894</sup>

*Patrick Flaherty – Peter Flaherty – Michael Flaherty – Peter Flaherty*

Michael Flaherty's son Peter was born in 1935; he married Helen M. Sorenson in 1964 and divorced in 1971. His second wife was Leota Mae Young who had been born in Palmer, Matanuska-Susitna Borough in Alaska in 1942. Leota, as a young person had attended a school for the deaf in Washington which may explain the reason why she had left Alaska. Leota's marriage to Peter was also her second marriage. As noted, Peter's brother-in-law, Vergil Florhaug, served in the U.S. armed forces as did Peter who served in the U.S. Navy during the American war with Korea. Peter died in 2008 and was buried in Willamette national Cemetery, Portland in Multnomah County, Oregon. He was 73 years of age at death. Peter's wife Leota died in 2013.<sup>895</sup>

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Minnesota; Registration County: Ramsey; Roll: 1675893; Draft Board: 02; Minnesota Birth Index, 1935-2002, Database, *FamilySearch* (<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:VCN9-LZ6>) Michael Flaherty and Alice Scheel in entry for Peter John Flaherty, 13 Feb 1935; citing Ramsey, Minnesota, United States, Minnesota Department of Health, Minneapolis; *Ancestry.com* 1920 Census Place: Oakdale, Washington, Minnesota; Roll: T625\_866; Page: 9A; Enumeration District: 180; Image: 874; *Ancestry.com* 1930 Census Place: St Paul, Ramsey, Minnesota; Roll: 1116; page: 4A Enumeration District: 0026; Image 459.0; FHL microfilm: 2340851; *Ancestry.com* 1940 Census Place: New Canada, Ramsey, Minnesota; Roll: T627\_1950; Page: 30B; Enumeration District: 62-3; *Ancestry.com* Social Security Death Index, 1935-2014 Record # 471-05-4853 [database on-line]. Alice Flaherty # 474-30-6958

<sup>894</sup> United States Public Records, 1970-2009, database, *FamilySearch* (<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:QJWQ-HG4K> :), P Flaherty Florhaug, Residence, Saint Paul, Minnesota, United States; Record# 418568026; *Ancesrty.com* U.S., Social Security Death Index, 1935-2014 [database on-line] Patricia died 1<sup>st</sup> July 2006. The dates of birth and death along with address were used to confirm Patricia and Vergil M Florhaug; *Ancestry.com* U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs BIRLS Death File, 1850-2010 [database on-line] Vergil Florhaug enlistment date 19 August 1950, release date 15 April 1952

<sup>895</sup> *Ancestry.com* Minnesota, Divorce Index, 1970-1995 [database on-line]; Minnesota, Marriage Index, 1958-2001," Database, *FamilySearch* (<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:VNSG-B7B>), Peter J Flaherty and Helen M Sorenson, 22 Oct 1964; from Minnesota, Marriage Collection, 1958-2001, database, Ancestry (<http://www.ancestry.com> : 2007); citing Ramsey, Minnesota, United States, State File number , Minnesota Center for Health Statistics, Office of the State Registrar, St. Paul; *Ancestry.com* U.S., Social Security Death Index, 1935-2014 [database on-line]; *Ancestry.com* U.S., Find A Grave Index, 1600s –Current;

*Patrick Flaherty – Mary Malone – Anna Turner – Yvonne Turner*

Patrick and Bridget's eldest daughter Mary was 22 years of age when she immigrated to Minnesota. In September 1881, a little over a year later, she married Martin Malone who had also emigrated from Ireland to the U.S. in 1880. By 1895 Mary and her family lived in North Minneapolis on Polk St. Mary had three daughters and one son; a second son had died in 1892 aged four. This was not to be her only loss. By 1900 Mary had given birth to ten children but only six had survived. Mary's husband Martin was employed by the railway in 1888; he continued to work for the railway 12 years later. In 1900 the family rented a home in ward six in Minneapolis on 19<sup>th</sup> Avenue South. Mary's eldest son also called Martin was 16 and was employed; his siblings attended school. Ten years later, Martin, Mary's husband, worked as a labourer for the city. Her son Martin worked at a saloon, her daughters Delia and Margaret were working; Margaret was employed at a laundry. Tragedy continued to follow Mary, her eldest son Martin, who was employed as a bartender died in 1912 and in 1917 her husband died at 59 years of age.

By 1930 Mary was 65 years old and a widow of thirteen years. Mary lived with her daughter Anna who had married William Turner. William was a veteran of WWI and worked for the city fire department. His father and mother were both immigrants; his father was English and his mother was Irish. Anna and William had three children; Yvonne who was born in 1923, William who was born three years later and Donna who was born in 1931. The family lived on Nokomis Avenue South and the home was valued at \$6,000 in 1930. A decade later William continued to work for the city fire department; his annual wage was £2,400.<sup>896</sup>

*Patrick Flaherty – Mary Malone – Mary Williams – Irene Kruger – Barbara Brown*

Mary and Martin Malone's eldest daughter Mary was born in 1889. She married Howard F Williams in 1907 and gave birth to her daughter Irene two years later. In 1910 the family resided in Minneapolis in ward 6. Howard had been born in New Jersey in 1884 of Irish parents. Howard worked as a shipping clerk; the family rented their home and shared it

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<sup>896</sup> *Ancestry.com*. Minnesota, Marriages Index, 1849-1950 FHL file# 1380423; "Minnesota, Death Records, 1866-1916," index, *FamilySearch* (<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:XP6Q-N4Z>), Martin Malone in entry for Coleman Malone, 28 Dec 1892; citing Minneapolis, Hennepin, Minnesota, , Public Health Center, St. Paul; FHL microfilm 1,499,015; 1895 State Census, 1900, 1910, 1930, 1940 Census *Ancestry.com*; Minnesota Death Index, 1908-2002 Martin Malone death 30 March 1917 record# 214595; "Minnesota, Deaths and Burials, 1835-1990," index, *FamilySearch* (<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:FD96-F9K>), Martin Malone in entry for Martin S. Malone, 30 Oct 1912; citing Minneapolis, Hennepin, Minnesota, reference 17905; FHL microfilm 2,138,525.; Martin Malone died 30 March 1917 in Clay County cert# 002490 record# 214595;

with three lodgers who helped to supplement the family income. Ten years later the family had moved to Philadelphia in Pennsylvania and Mary had given birth to five more children. In 1920 Howard worked as a street car conductor. No further information was available with regard to Mary or Martin Malone after 1920 as they could have died but it is most likely some of their children returned to Minnesota.

Mary and Howard's eldest daughter Irene married Herbert Kruger in 1927. Herbert was raised in Minnesota as his wife Mary had been. Herbert's father was born in Wisconsin of German parents and his mother was a German immigrant. By 1940 Irene and Herbert had six children and were renting a home in Minneapolis. Herbert worked as a fireman for the railway but it would seem he did not have sufficient employment having only worked 24 hours the week previous to the census being completed. His low income is verified by his annual wage which was \$1,800 for the previous year. It was difficult to discover more information regarding Irene and Herbert with the exception of their death records. Irene died in 1989; her husband Herbert had died ten years previously.



Image of Barbara Kruger

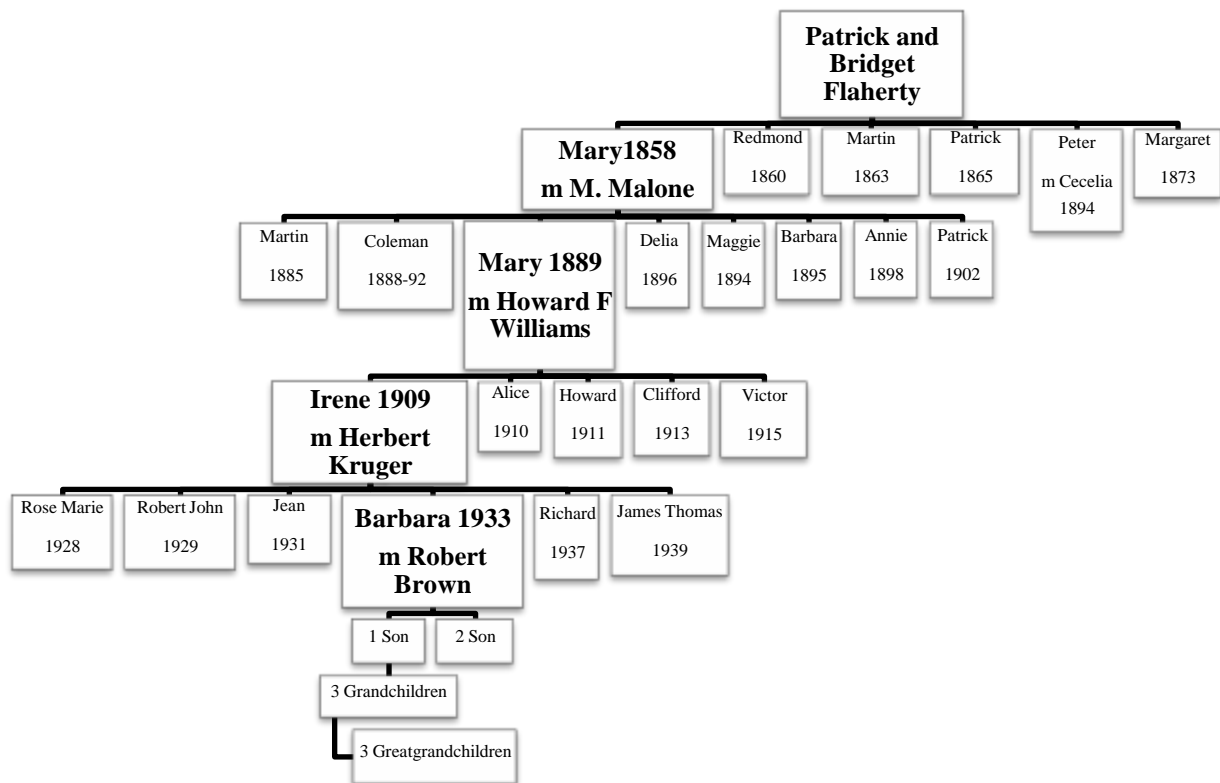
Irene Kruger's daughter Barbara was born in 1933 and married Robert J Brown in 1960. Records are limited for Barbara and Robert with the exception of a death record for Barbara who died in 2006.<sup>897</sup> Barbara's last address was in Golden Valley which is a city in

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<sup>897</sup> Marriage Licence #118-402; 1907 Mary C Malone and Howard F Williams; 1910, 1920, 1930, 1940 Census; Ancestry.com; Irene Mary Kruger 29<sup>th</sup> March 1909 died 30 April 1989 in Hennepin in Minnesota, Mother's maiden name Malone file#009742 record # 2319945 (Minnesota Death Index, Minneapolis, MN Department of Health. Herbert Robert August Kruger born 25 September 1903 in Gaylord, Sibley, Minnesota, USA died 19

Hennepin County and a western suburb of Minneapolis. She had two sons, five grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. Barbara's obituary provided further information with regard to her siblings; her sisters were identified as Rose West and Jean Ludwig. Barbara was also survived by her brothers Joe and Tom.<sup>898</sup>

#### Genealogy of Mary Malone



#### Redmond Flaherty

The eldest son of Patrick and Bridget Flaherty was Redmond who was born in 1860. He married Mary Welch in 1883. By 1900 Redmond and Mary were living in ward two in St Paul and had seven children; Redmond and his eldest son Patrick, were employed as day labourers. His daughter Mary aged 14 was working as a tobacco stripper by removing the leaves from the stalks of the tobacco plant. Both Redmond and Patrick had spent six months of the last 12 months unemployed however, despite the unreliable income the family owned their home and did not have a mortgage. Ten years later Redmond and his son Patrick both

December 1979 in Minneapolis, Hennepin, MN; Herbert and Irene's daughter Barbara Kruger b 29 September 1932 and died 6<sup>th</sup> August 2006. Name at death Barbara A. Brown. Last residence 55427 Minneapolis, Hennepin MN. US Social Security Death Index

<sup>898</sup> [www.legacy.com/Obituaries.asp?Page=LifeStory&PersonId=18737193](http://www.legacy.com/Obituaries.asp?Page=LifeStory&PersonId=18737193)

worked for the railroad. By 1930 Redmond and his wife Mary lived alone at 1077 Wakefield Ave in St Paul, Redmond remained working as a switch tender for the railway, even though he was 70 years of age. The couple owned their home which had a value of \$6,000. Redmond died in 1935.<sup>899</sup>

Redmond's son Michael was born in 1905; he married his wife Ruth when they were both 22 years of age. By 1930 Michael worked as a clerk in the railroad office and rented a home on Hastings Ave in St Paul. A decade later Michael and Ruth continued to rent a home in St Paul. The family lived on Arcade Street where they had resided for the previous five years. Michel and Ruth had two children, Geraldine who was born in 1929 and Robert who was born two years later. Michael worked as a rodman and although he stated he worked 52 weeks of the year his wage appeared low at \$895 for the previous year. Michael Flaherty died in 1962.<sup>900</sup>

Michael's son Robert married Phyllis Irene Luck and had four children. Robert died in 2013, his obituary stated he was a veteran of the Korean War and had worked for the Burlington Northern Railroad for 36 years. His wife died in March 2015; their last residency was Woodbury in Minnesota. Robert and Phyllis were survived by their children and grandchildren. Mark Flaherty, Jill Fiebiger, Paul Flaherty and his wife Jeanne and Diane Moyle and her husband Richard.<sup>901</sup> This researcher contacted Jill Fiebiger in July 2015. The unusual surname along with the fact that Jill had a photography business led to contact being possible via social media. Jill lived in St Paul close to Summit Avenue in St Paul. She was surprised at having been contacted but more importantly she was able to confirm her family lineage was correctly recorded.

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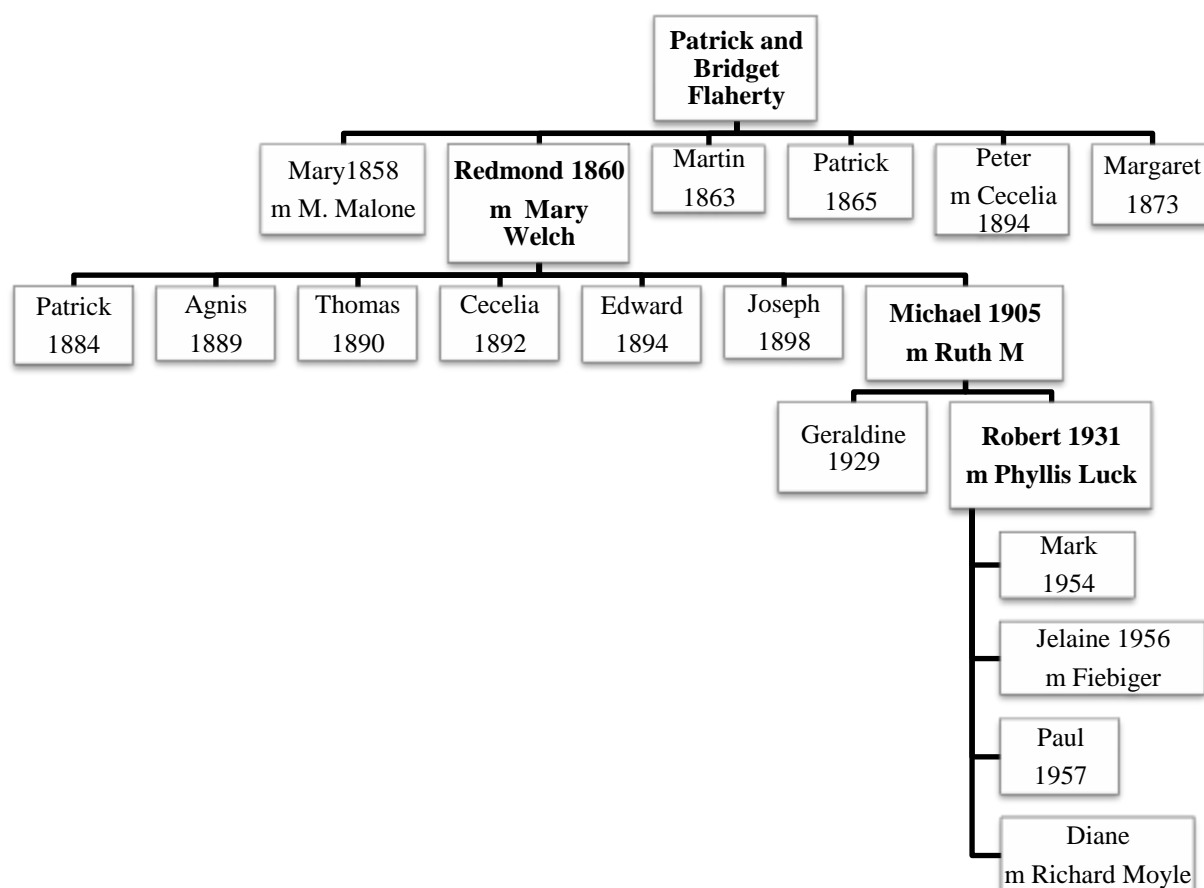
<sup>899</sup> Ancestry.com. Minnesota, Marriages Index, 1849-1950 FHL file# 1314551; 1900, 1910, 1920, 1930, Census, Ancestry.com, St Paul Ward 2, Ramsey, Minnesota: Roll: 783; Page: 10B; Enumeration District: 0075; FHL microfilm:1240783; Minnesota, Death Index, 1908-2002; File# 024905 Record# 703569

<sup>900</sup> Ancestry.com. Minnesota, Births and Christenings Index, 1840-1980 FHL Film# 1309135; 1930 census St Paul Ramsey, Minnesota; Roll 1116 page 5A; Enumeration District: 0028; Image 581.0 FHL microfilm 2340851; 1940 Census St Paul Minnesota Roll: T627\_1995; Page 6A; Enumeration District: 90-41; Minnesota Death Index, 1908-2002, database, *FamilySearch*, (<https://familysearch.org/ark:61903/1:1:V47M-9Q5>) Michael T. Flaherty, 11 September 1962; citing Ramsey, Minnesota, record 1511165, cert# 030934, Minnesota Department of Health, Minneapolis.

<sup>901</sup> Minnesota, Birth Index, 1935-2002, Database, *FamilySearch* (<https://familysearch.org/ark:61903/1:1:VCX8-CX5>), Robert Michael Flaherty in entry for Paul Robert Flaherty, 30 Dec 1957; citing Ramsey, Minnesota, United States, Minnesota Department of Health, Minneapolis; Minnesota, Birth Index, 1935-2002," Database, *FamilySearch* (<https://familysearch.org/ark:61903/1:1:VCXS-D16>), Robert Michael Flaherty in entry for Jelaine Marie Flaherty, 08 Feb 1956; citing Ramsey, Minnesota, United States, (<https://familysearch.org/ark:61903/1:1:VCXH-67V>), Robert Michael Flaherty in entry for Mark Allen Flaherty, 27 Jun 1954; [http://www.meaningfulfunerals.net/fh/obituaries/obituary.cfm?o\\_id=2348576&fh\\_id=12984](http://www.meaningfulfunerals.net/fh/obituaries/obituary.cfm?o_id=2348576&fh_id=12984); [http://www.meaningfulfunerals.net/fh/obituaries/obituary.cfm?o\\_id=2996602&fh\\_id=12984](http://www.meaningfulfunerals.net/fh/obituaries/obituary.cfm?o_id=2996602&fh_id=12984) ;



## Genealogy of Redmond Flaherty



### 11. Family of Martin and Mary King

The King family were from Roundstone. When the family left Graceville it was difficult to find documentation regarding Martin and Mary King prior to the census of 1895.<sup>902</sup> Fifteen years after they had immigrated to Minnesota, Martin and his wife were living in ward 9 in St Paul. By that time their children had left the family home but a grandson was living with the couple. Fred McFarland was five years old. Martin was employed as a day labourer and he and his wife stated they could not read or write in the census of 1900. Martin's eldest daughter Mary had married Fred's father Joseph in 1887 in Montana which means by the age of 20 or younger, Mary was living in Montana. Fred

<sup>902</sup>Ireland Births and Baptisms, 1620-1881, index, *FamilySearch* (<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:FGZ1-ZBN>), Martin King in entry for Ellen King, 12 Jun 1875; citing Galway, Ireland, reference v 14-1 p 187; FHL microfilm 255,937

continued to live with his grandparents in 1905. Mary King died in 1917 and her husband died in 1924, Mary was 72 and Martin was 79 years old at the time of death.<sup>903</sup>

Mary King, who was the mother of Fred McFarland, married James Linn in 1894. Mary's first marriage broke down or her first husband may have died. The second marriage could explain why Fred resided with his grandparents in 1900 even though his mother lived in St Paul at the same time. In 1900 Mary and her husband worked as boarding house keepers and shared their home with four male boarders. By 1910 Mary and James had increased their family from three children to six; the family had migrated west to Oakland City Ward 7, Alameda in California. James stated he was not working in the 1910 census and the family were renting their home. James Linn was born in Ohio and his father and mother had both been born in the U.S.; his father was born in Pennsylvania. It would seem the Linn family were a part of the great migration west.<sup>904</sup>

By 1910 Fred M. McFarland who was 22 years old was a soldier in the U.S. Army. He was stationed in San Francisco in California. Oakland and San Francisco are linked by the Golden Gate Bridge so it seems Fred lived close to his family in California. However Fred and his mother did not continued to live close to one another as by 1920 Mary and her husband had migrated to Eagle Point, Jackson, in Oregon.<sup>905</sup> James Linn supported his family from his pension as a retired veteran. James had engaged in active duty in 1881 and the particular conflict was abbreviated as SAW which may imply the South American War of the Pacific. The family also indicated they lived on a farm in Oregon which had a value of £10,000; produce from the farm would have supplemented the family income.<sup>906</sup> James Linn died in 1958 and was buried in San Francisco National Cemetery. The most remarkable feature of Mary King's life is the great distances she travelled having left Ireland. From Minnesota to Montana where she gave birth to her first child; Mary's second and third

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<sup>903</sup> Minnesota state census, 1895 *FamilySearch* (<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:MQ6B-LM6>) Ward 9 Ramsey Minnesota Citing p.85, line 24, FHL microfilm 565,803; 1905 Census *FamilySearch* (<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:SPQ9-8R4>) citing p. 8 line 60, FHL microfilm 928,809; Ancestry.com 1900 United States Federal Census [database on-line]; Montana, County Marriages, 1865-1950, database with images, *FamilySearch* (<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:F34H-CSN>), Joseph W. McFarland and Mary King, 03 Apr 1887; citing Marriage, Gallatin County, , Montana, county courthouses, Montana; FHL microfilm 1,941,481; Minnesota Death Index 1908-2002 database, *FamilySearch* (<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:V4HG-L8M>) Mrs Martin Mary King 6 February 1917 record# 210624, cert #021784, Minnesota Department of Health; Martin King, 23 November 1924 Minnesota Death Index (<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:V4ZL-6T2> record# 416825 cert# 024864

<sup>904</sup> Ancestry.com 1900 Census, St Paul MN; 1910 United States Federal Census [database on-line], Oakland Ward 7, Alameda, California; Roll: T624\_71; Page 8B; Enumeration District: 0027; FHL microfilm: 1374084

<sup>905</sup> Ancestry.com 1920, 1930 Census; Eagle Point, Jackson, Oregon; Roll: T625\_1495; page 3B enumeration district 176; image 129.

<sup>906</sup> Ancestry.com 1910 United States Federal Census [database on-line];

children were born en route to Minnesota via Nebraska. Upon leaving Minnesota once more she travelled to California and finally settled on a farm in Oregon.

Mary King's first son Fred McFarland's WWI draft records described him as tall, slender with brown eyes and dark brown hair. In 1917 he was 29 years of age and was single, he had already served three years in the infantry as a Private. His address was given as St Paul; his record further stated he was born in Bozeman Montana. Although Fred was unemployed at the time of the draft register he stated his occupation was a teamster.<sup>907</sup> By 1920 when Fred was 32 years old, his census record stated he was 'serving time' in Alcatraz in San Francisco Bay. The prison was most famous for its notorious inmates of the 1930s but, prior to this, it was an Army prison where most of the prisoners were serving short-term sentences for desertion or lesser crimes though with some serving sentences for insubordination, assault or larceny. The Department of Justice took charge of the prison in 1934 which coincided with a new era of organised crime. In 1930 Fred at the age of 40 married Leona Mabel Slater who was a 49 year old widow. Fred was living at 1330 Ocean Boulevard in Long Beach California and Leona gave her address as 511 4h St Anacortes in Washington. Fred stated he was a rancher.<sup>908</sup>

In 1940, in his fifties, Fred was employed as a gardener in Los Angeles. He rented accommodation which cost a mere \$5 a month, suggesting he was working away from home and living inexpensively or that his marriage had ended. He had only worked ten weeks in 1939 and earned \$90. The grandson of Martin and Mary King may have been a great distance from labouring in the far west of Ireland but it would seem by 1940 he was living in poverty as his ancestors had in Ireland.

### *Martin King – Helen King*

Helen or Ellen King as she was identified was born in 1875. Ellen was the second youngest child of Martin King. At 18 years old, Ellen married Robert Hicks in 1892 who was 17 years her senior. Robert was born in Missouri and his parents were born in Virginia as such a southern man met and married a young Irish migrant. The marriage took place in Livingston, Park in Montana which indicated at least two of the King daughters were living in Montana in the 1890s. Robert Hicks worked as a stage driver. By 1900 Ellen and her

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<sup>907</sup> Ancestry.com; U.S. World War I Registration Cards, 1917-1918, Minnesota; Registration County: Ramsey; Roll: 1682638; Draft Board: 08; 1920 Census Place: San Francisco Assembly District 33, San Francisco California; Roll: T625\_140; Page: 43B; Enumeration District: 368; Image: 450

<sup>908</sup> Marriage Cert Fred M McFarland and Leona Mabel Slater state index # 3831; Date 26 March 1930. California State Board of Health.

husband were living in Idaho; they had three children and her sister Barbara resided with the family. The 1910 the family had relocated once more to Grant County in Washington. Ten years later the family had moved to Pacific Avenue in Kittitas County in Washington. Robert continued to work as a driver for a stage company and only two children remained at home, Helen who was 17 and her younger brother Martin who was 14.

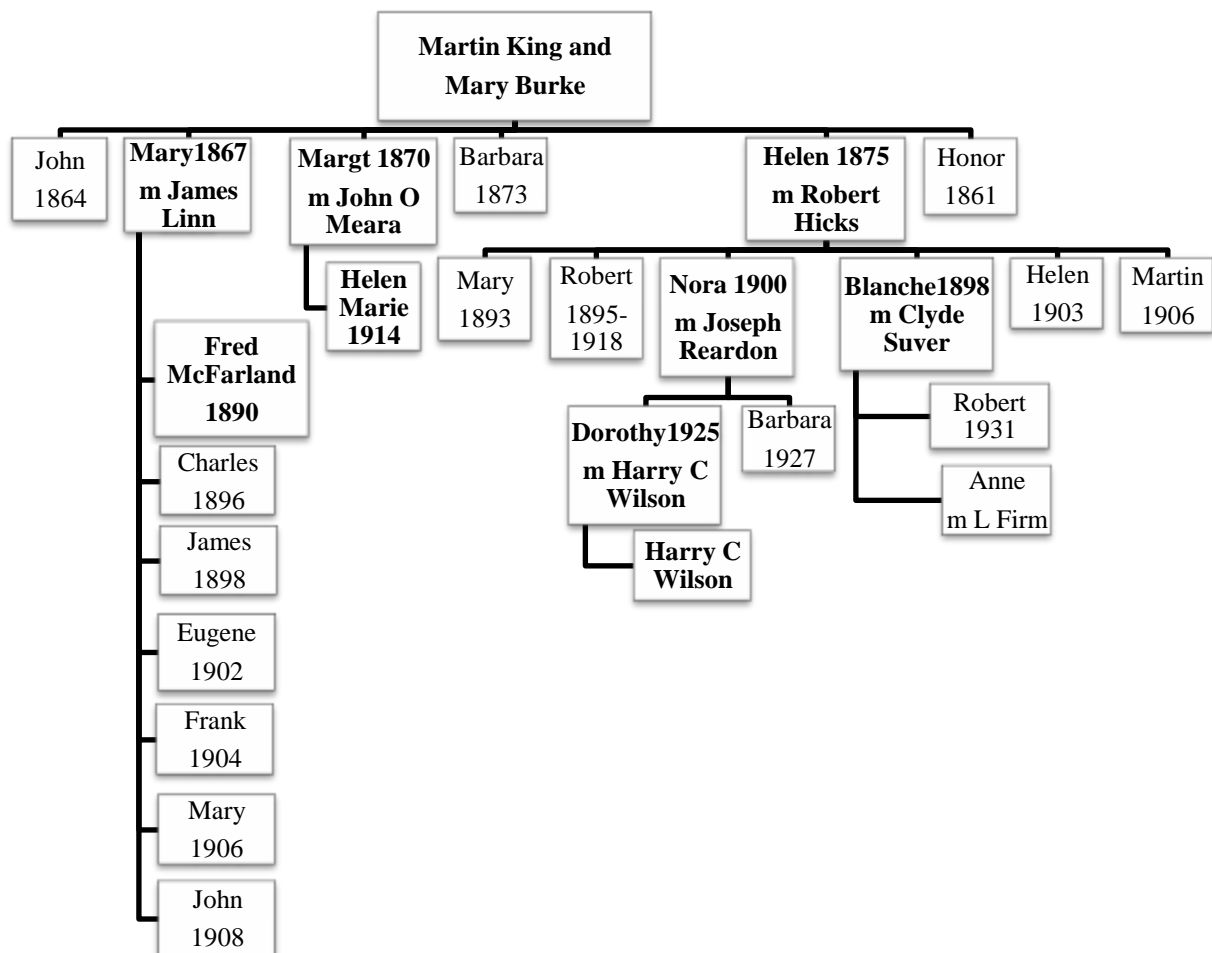
*Martin King – Ellen Hicks – Nora Reardon – Dorothy R. Wilson*

By 1930 Ellen and her husband were living in the city of Seattle, they shared their home with their daughter Nora and her children; Dorothy and Barbara. The family owned their home and when compared to other homes in the immediate surrounds its value was modest at \$5,700; other homes were valued from \$10,000 to \$30,000. Robert had retired and their daughter Nora worked as a teacher at a public school in Seattle. Robert died in 1932 and was buried in Seattle in Washington. By 1940 Nora no longer lived with her parents but another daughter Helen resided with Ellen who was 65 years old. Helen also worked as a public school teacher in Seattle and earned \$2,600 annually. Ellen Hicks died in 1955 aged 81 years in Seattle Washington. Ellen King similar to her sister Mary, travelled with her family from Minnesota to Montana and then to Washington giving birth along the way in Idaho. The family settled in Washington and Ellen spent the latter decades of her life with her family in Seattle.

As already noted, Nora and her children lived with Ellen and Robert in 1930. Nora had married Joseph Reardon in 1922 but by 1930 Nora was widowed which may explain why she resided with her parents temporarily. By 1940 Nora lived with her children in Seattle where she owned her own home which had an average value of \$4,500. She worked as a clerk and earned \$1,620 annually. Nora died in 1982 aged 87; she was buried with her sister Helen Hicks. Nora retained the name of her first husband which indicated she never married again.

Nora's daughter, Dorothy R. Wilson died in 2001; her husband Harry died the following year. An on-line search revealed that Dorothy's sister had died in 1990. A newspaper article in the *Seattle Times* indicated Barbara and Dorothy had a close relationship. When Barbara finished law school from George Washington University in Washington D.C. in 1952 she found it difficult to obtain 'valued employment', as according to her sister, 'During that time, only 2 per cent of the lawyers were women. Firms would say to her, "Oh, you have the best resume we've seen in years, but unfortunately we can't hire you"'. In 1959 Barbara joined with her brother-in-law starting the Wilson and Reardon law firm in Bellevue Washington. What is surprising but not unexpected is that although the

newspaper article recognises the efforts of the Reardon and Wilson families it fails to recognise how both daughters were raised single-handedly by their mother who had lost her husband so early in her marriage. The achievements of both daughters must lie not solely with their individual efforts but also with the efforts of their mother and her family.<sup>909</sup>



<sup>909</sup> Helen is referred in most documentation as Ellen. The marriage certificate of Helen and Robert Hicks provided the surname of Helen's mother who was Mary Burke. Montana County Marriages, 1865-1950, FamilySearch (<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:F33V-F98>) Robert Hicks and Ellen E. King 1 July 1892; citing Marriage, Livingston, Park, Montana, FHL microfilm 1,940,410; Ancestry.com; 1900, 1910, 1920, 1930, 1940 U.S. Federal Census [database on-line]; BillionGraves Index, database, *FamilySearch*, (<http://billiongraves.com>); Robert F Hicks; Washington Death Certificates, 1907-1960, database, FamilySearch (<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:N3B5-482>, Ellen Hicks, 29 October 1955; reference 19043, Bureau of Vital Statistics, Olympia; FHL microfilm 2,033,539; <http://community.seattletimes.nwsources.com/archive/?date=19901116&slug=1104500>; Find a Grave Index, database, FamilySearch (<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:QVVB-YK3M>) Nora H Reardon, 1982; Burial, Bellevue, King, Washington citing record ID 8119683, [www.findagrave.com](http://www.findagrave.com); Find a Grave Index, database, FamilySearch (<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:QVVB-YLDD>) Dorothy R Wilson, 2001, Bellevue, King, Washington, citing record ID 8119686, [www.findagrave.com](http://www.findagrave.com)

*Martin King – Helen Hicks – Blanche Suver*

Blanche Hicks who was more commonly referred to Barbara was born in 1898 in Bozeman in Montana. In 1912 as a young child she moved with her parents to Ellensburg from Salt Lake City. She was employed as a teacher for a year prior to her marriage to Clyde Suver in 1917. Blanche's sister Nora was a witness at her wedding and the marriage took place in Ellensburg in Kittitas County in Washington.

Clyde Suver was a rancher who was born in 1890 to early Kittitas Valley pioneers. His father was born in Pennsylvania and his mother was born in California. In the 1930s Blanche and Clyde lived close to Suver family members, who owned and ran the local grocery store. As a young man Clyde operated a livery stable. Clyde along with his brother Harry operated and managed the family farm which was located west of Ellensburg. City directories of the 1930s and 40s indicated Clyde was Vice President at Comstock-Arvidson Company. He died in 1970 at the age of 79 years. Blanche had preceded Clyde in death, she died in 1966.



Image of Rev Charles Suver saying mass as Iwo Jima in 1945

The Suvers had one son Robert who lived in Yakima in the 1960s and one daughter, Anne L. Firm, of Coon Rapids in Minnesota. As such a descendant of Martin and Mary King was residing in Minnesota having left Washington. At the time of her death Blanche had eight grandchildren. Lastly in a surprising discovery it appears Robert Suver the son of Blanche Hicks is the nephew of Charles Suver who was Clyde's brother. More notably the Rev. Charles F. Suver was the Jesuit priest who celebrated mass atop Mount Suribachi after the historic flag-raising at Iwo Jima during WWII. At 39 years of age the priest had

accompanied the Marines who had landed at Iwo Jima in 1945 for the bloodiest battle in the Pacific. As such it would seem the family grew up in the shadow of a national hero.<sup>910</sup>

## 12. John and Margaret Coyne

Although both John Coyne and his wife were described as ‘looking sickly’ by the Graceville Committee in 1880 the family did not leave Big Stone county for St Paul. John stated he was thankful to Bishop Ireland; the family was fortunate to have sufficient wood unlike so many others but they required more nourishment and had received five pounds of oatmeal from those who arrived to investigate the situation from Morris.<sup>911</sup>

### John Coyne and Margaret Sullivan

Patrick	1866
<b>Catherine</b>	<b>1869</b>
Honoria	1870
Bridget	1872
<b>John</b>	<b>1874</b>
Maria	1876
Peter	1878
Teresa	1880
<b>Joseph</b>	<b>1881</b>
Agnes	1884
Maggie	1887
Frances	1890



Image of Joseph and Maria Coyne

John Coyne was born in 1841 and his wife Margaret Sullivan was born in 1846 and although Margaret did not give birth to her first child until she was twenty, the couple had a large family of twelve children. Margaret was 34 when she arrived in Minnesota with eight children and by 1885 Margaret had two more children: Michael in 1882 and Agnes. By 1895

<sup>910</sup> Ancestry.com U.S. City Directories, 1821-1989 [database on-line] 1939, 1941, 1946. Ancestry.com U.S. census 1920, 1930, 1940. Marriage certificate Kittitas County Washington, Blanche Hicks and Clyde J Suver record# 2046; <http://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=gr&GRid=12327277>; [http://digitalwa.statelib.wa.gov:2012/cdm4/item\\_viewer.php?CISOROOT=/ellensburg&CISOPTR=2606&CISOBOX=1&REC=2](http://digitalwa.statelib.wa.gov:2012/cdm4/item_viewer.php?CISOROOT=/ellensburg&CISOPTR=2606&CISOBOX=1&REC=2) ; <http://community.seattletimes.nwsources.com/archive/?date=19930415&slug=1695978>;

<sup>911</sup> *Saint Paul and Minneapolis Pioneer Press* 21 December 1880

two more children were added: Maggie and Francis. By 1900 John Coyne senior was 59 years old but may have been in poor health as his son, also named John was head of the family. John Coyne senior died young aged 67 in 1908. Margaret continued to reside with her son and his family on the family homestead in Big Stone until her death in 1924.<sup>912</sup>

#### *John Coyne – John Coyne junior*

John Coyne junior, Margaret's son was born in 1874. He married Bertha Kussrow in 1921 and had a daughter named after his mother, Margaret. Bertha was born in Minnesota of German parents. In 1895 the Kussrow family resided in St Paul where Bertha's father worked as a carpenter. John and Bertha had married late in life and his daughter was 15 years old when John died of a heart attack in 1937. According to his obituary, John was 'honest and square in all his dealings ... whose faith in the integrity of his fellow-man was unbounded'.<sup>913</sup> It would appear the Coyne family genetically may have been prone to heart disease and this may explain why John died at a young age too. The following year the eldest son of John and Margaret, Patrick, died of a cerebral haemorrhage. Patrick had not married and was employed as a travelling auditor for the Cargill Elevator Company at Beardsley.<sup>914</sup>

By 1940 Bertha and Margaret had moved to Studdard Avenue in Graceville. Bertha worked as a seamstress and her daughter Margaret who was 18 worked as a typist at the public school. Bertha's annual wage was £444 and Margaret who had only worked part-time, earned £50. The family were renting their home which had a rental value of £5 a month. Bertha Coyne died in 1956 in Big Stone.<sup>915</sup>

#### *John Coyne – Joseph Coyne – Edith Sellers – Dick Sellers – Matt Sellers*

In 1920 Joseph the youngest son of the Coyne family married Mariah Cox who had immigrated to America from Longford in 1885. Mariah was two years old when her family left Ireland. Joseph's older brother John had inherited the family farm but Joseph remained farming and he and Mariah mortgaged land in Big Stone. The WWI draft records of 1918 described Joseph as being of medium height and build with grey eyes and dark brown hair; by this time he was married to Mariah. Maria and Joseph resided in Morris for four years and

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<sup>912</sup> 1885, 1895, 1900 Census Minnesota Historical Society; *Graceville Enterprise*, 18 January 1924

<sup>913</sup> 1895, 1920, 1930 census, Minnesota Historical Society; *Graceville Enterprise and Dumont Tribune*, 23 March 1937

<sup>914</sup> *Graceville Enterprise*, 1 February 1938

<sup>915</sup> Ancestry.com 1940 census [database on-line]; Minnesota Death Index, Ancestry.com State File#000883, record# 1300385



then in White Earth Minnesota between the years 1932 and 1942.<sup>916</sup> The couple had two children; one son and one daughter. Joseph died in 1957 of a heart attack as his brother had before him. At the time of his death he held the position of Mayor of Graceville. Joseph's obituary noted the absence of the couple for a number of years. Although Joseph farmed in Big Stone he later opened a shoe repair shop in Graceville. Mariah died in 1976 aged 93 years. Joseph and Mariah were members of the Catholic Holy Rosary Church; Joseph was also a member of the Knights of Columbus.<sup>917</sup>

Joseph and Mariah's daughter Edith received a B.S. in Dietetics from the University of Kentucky. She interned at Massachusetts General Hospital and became head dietician at Parkview Hospital in 1947 where she met and married Joseph Arthur Sellers in 1948. Edith founded the Pine Drive Telephone Co in Beulah in Colorado in 1956 where she worked until her retirement. Joseph Sellers died in 1993 and Edith died in 2002 aged 87 years old in Beulah Colorado, her brother Joseph Richard Coyne, lived in Santa Barbara in California; he died in 2004.<sup>918</sup> Edith's son Dick provided an insight into how the family established the telephone company. Joseph worked in the Tube Mill and 'once the family and cows were fed the rest of his paycheck went to the phone company'. Edith stayed at home to run the office and switchboard. With no help from banks the family relied upon support from the employees of Western Electric and Mountain States Telephone Company and in an effort to keep costs down the Sellers used materials thrown away by Bell and picked up by a Pueblo scrap dealer. 'When we needed telephone poles, we went to the forest, cut down trees, peeled the bark and treated them with creosote'.<sup>919</sup> The article named Richard and Lee's sons who were Matt and Mike. An on-line search revealed a 2012 blog written by Matt Sellers who stated he had a brother Mike. As a storm chaser Matt recalled his interest in meteorology and further provided information with regard to his wife and children. Matt stated he was CFO and general manager at a local telecommunications company, the Pine Drive Telephone Company. Matt married Jenn and had two daughters at the time the blog was written.<sup>920</sup>

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<sup>916</sup> Obituary from Graceville newspaper 1976 found at Ancestry.com

<http://trees.ancestrylibrary.com/tree/70061257/person/44216580957/story/1?pg=32917&pgpl=pid>

<sup>917</sup> *Graceville Enterprise*, 5 March 1957

<sup>918</sup> Ancestry.com U.S. Social Security Index, 1935-2014 [database on-line];

<http://www.kmitch.com/Pueblo/obits/sel-seq.html>;

<sup>919</sup> Musings of a country telephone man by Richard Sellers. <http://www.pinedrivetel.com/musings.html>

<sup>920</sup> <http://nrnilstormchaser.blogspot.ie/2012/02/chaser-profile-matt-sellers.html>

*John Coyne – Catherine Heily – John Heily*

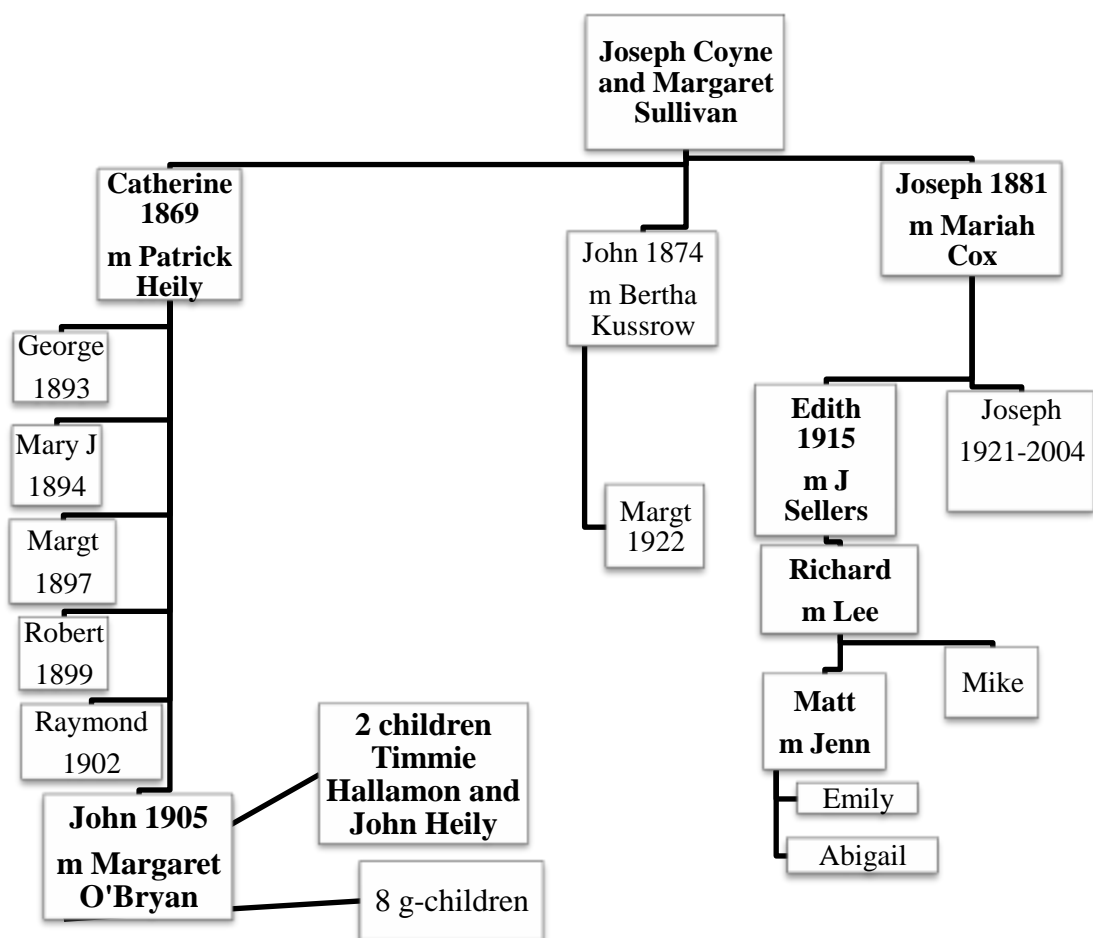
The eldest daughter of John and Margaret Coyne was Catherine who according to the shipping list was born in 1869. Catherine married Patrick Heily who was Irish and 14 years her senior. By 1900 the couple had four children: George who was born in 1892, his sister Mary was born a year later. Their third child Margaret was born in 1896 and Robert was born in 1898. Catherine's sister Agnes also resided with the family in 1900. Patrick worked as a wheat buyer and had immigrated to the U.S. in 1869. By 1910 Catherine and her family had moved to Spokane Washington and the family had increased to six children: Raymond was born in 1902 and John was born in 1905. In Spokane, Patrick and Catherine owned a grocery store; their eldest son George worked in the business with his father. A decade later the family had moved to Seattle. Patrick had died and Catherine's daughters had left home. Three of Catherine's sons remained with her, George was employed at a dry cleaner, Robert was a cash register salesman and John was a hosiery salesman. The family were renting their home which had a modest rent of \$65, other rents on the census page started at \$100 with a maximum rent of \$180 paid for a single property. In 1940 Catherine and her sons George and Robert remained in the same house on Lakeside Avenue. George was working as a manager in the cleaning and pressing industry. His brother Robert worked as a facting manager at a ladies dress factory. They remained renting their home. Catherine died in 1942 in Seattle in Washington.<sup>921</sup>

John Heily married Margaret Lucyle O'Bryan who was from Iowa. By 1940 the couple had one daughter, Timotha. John worked as a salesman, he earned \$3000 annually and he owned his home which was substantial. Of the 12 homes on the census page all homes were owned, 10 are valued at less than \$2,000 and two are valued at \$10,000. John Heily's home was valued at \$9,600. The family employed a maid which by 1940 was not a desirable position to most single women. However when the economy of the U.S. in the 1930s is considered, it is not surprising that some women remained working in domestic employment. For 20 weeks employment in 1939, the family's maid, Jessie May Smith, earned \$100. John died in 1983 in Seattle. His obituary stated he was the father of Timmie Hollamon of Bellevue and John M. Heily of Mercer Island. His sister and brother survived him, (Mary) Josephine Parry and Raymond Heily both resided in Seattle.<sup>922</sup>

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<sup>921</sup> Ancestry.com 1900, 1900, 1920, 1930, 1940 United States Federal Census [database on-line]; Washington Death Certificates, 1907-1960, database, FamilySearch (<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:N3T7-FQ2>) Catherine Coyne Heily 8 September 1942 FHL microfilm 2,024,059

<sup>922</sup> 1940 United States Federal Census [database on-line] Polk, King, Washington; Roll T627\_4345 Page 5A; Enumeration District: 17-158; <http://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=gr&GRid=77170651>



## Conclusion

Of the twelve families examined in this chapter, the majority had members who later migrated. The migration paths are of interest as with the exception of two, all migrations were westward. The completion of the railroads following the Civil War opened up vast regions of the West to settlement and economic development. Washington became the forty second state of the U.S. in 1889 and this status brought with it opportunities in agriculture, lumber and mining. Nugent's immigrants arrived in the U.S. at the peak of immigration which occurred from 1880 to 1920. Irish and German immigrants had emigrated to the U.S. in great numbers by 1880 when they were joined by immigrants from southern and eastern European countries along with Asians. A new and complex society was evident as America became even more diverse. New languages and new religions meant emerging towns and cities particularly those of the west were places where difference was to be expected and accepted. Although employment opportunities were readily available for Irish immigrants

and their descendants in eastern cities, the opportunities to acquire land or an affordable home in the west was preferred. It seems the patterns identified in the study of the Irish in America were replicated by Nugent's immigrants and their descendants. The cities of the east coast of America imbued in Irish immigrants the need for an Irish enclave outside of Ireland. In areas of mass Irish migration an Irish county was often recognised before Irish national identity. However the American states west of New England witnessed a population expansion in the latter decades of the nineteenth century and it was this diverse mix of multiple cultures which was so dynamic in itself it prevented ethnic dominance of any one group. Indeed it would appear from this study of immigrants that a completely different society evolved in the west, this new society recognised ethnic groups as a separate identity but also recognised the diverse society they existed within.

The patterns of Irish-Americans as indicated in an earlier chapter further included a loyalty to their new homeland as seen by their willingness to join the armed forces. This was also evident with the descendants of Nugent's immigrants. The fact that marriages between different ethnic groups provided diverse communities may have led to whole communities evolving as American communities and not as 'Little Bohemia' and 'Little Italy'. The majority of the second generation of Nugent's immigrants married people of other nationalities. This diverse and multiethnic cultural mix included Native Americans. It would appear that society of the west saw difference as the shared common feature.

Most of Nugent's immigrants who were studied successfully integrated and contributed to American life. The majority of immigrants improved their family circumstances but when placed against a backdrop of extreme poverty it was unlikely the immigrants would fare worse by immigration. It was not possible to consider each family and it is most likely that those who integrated most successfully could be discovered more easily than those who continued to struggle. Of the families that were identified, there was no evidence to suggest vagrancy. The availability of employment by migrating west provided economic opportunities. The success of the Gallagher family in Big Stone County vindicated Nugent's decision to send Ireland's poorest. It was noted that those who immigrated from Aughagower did not appear as impoverished as the immigrants of south Connemara. This may have been a factor in their success, however, not all of those who immigrated from Aughagower remained in Graceville and it may be assumed the cities offered greater incentive to relocate. The success of the Gallagher family must also be due to their own resolve or at the very least their own personal determination. The opportunity afforded to the Gallagher children by way of

education saw their youngest child become a doctor and one of their grandchildren also become a doctor. The likelihood of this occurring in Ireland at the turn of the nineteenth century would have been remote. What was most likely and to be expected, had the Gallagher family remained in the mountains of Mayo, the family traditions which may have included migrating each year to labour in England or Scotland would have continued. Other families including the Coyne and Flahertys of south Connemara assimilated to the new emerging society. Despite the fact some of Nugent's immigrants may have been involved in disputes in the far west of Connemara and were subsequently labelled as beggars, it can be seen that once provided with the opportunities to improve their circumstances, most families thrived and led successful lives. The short-term label which considered Nugent's immigrants as failures must be cast aside as their achievements over generations ensured they were a welcome addition to an expanding America.

## Conclusion

By 1880 when Nugent's immigrants arrived in Minnesota the state was filled with many different vibrant cultures co-existing in larger settlements while other smaller settlements retained a mono-culture holding on to the language and traditions they transferred from a European place of birth. German natives were prominent in New Ulm, Swedes settled in the St. Croix Valley and were further drawn to Goodhue, and Nicollet counties. Thousands of Norwegians settled in the southern counties of Houston and Fillmore. Zumbrota was organised in 1856 by the Strafford Western Emigration Society with Puritans drawn to the settlement by the rules applied there. The St. Cloud region had settlers from Monte Cassino and the Bavarian Metten in Germany to which was added St. John's Seminary in 1856 and a year later the Benedictine Sisters founded the convent of St. Benedict's and the expansion of a German Catholic colony was well underway.<sup>923</sup> It was not only the collection of so many Europeans which gave early Minnesota its cultural exoticism: added to this mix were the many bands of native Americans which included the Sioux, the Ojibwas and the Chippewa. Nugent's immigrants were neither the first nor the last people from the west of Ireland who chose to settle in Minnesota.<sup>924</sup>

For all those who settled on the Minnesota prairie, the life of a pioneer was arduous and fraught with dangers where only the hardest and most determined remained. The frontier, as the west was identified, 'marked the line separating settled regions from unsettled, "civilised" peoples from "savages"'. Settlers were seen as cultural warriors, who went beyond the frontier and as they did so they dragged the line marking the frontier with them. 'They were changing places geographically, but they were also part of an ongoing historical process'.<sup>925</sup> Most early accounts showed how settlers feared indigenous populations and further highlighted a settler's life as a lonely and isolating existence. By the 1860s the west opened up with the building of the railroads but the civil war brought hardships as many families suffered in the absence of men who were desperately needed for harvest and general farm labour. The Sioux uprising and the massacres that followed left the precarious relationship between settlers and Native Americans even more strained.

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<sup>923</sup> Blegen, Theodore C., 'Brave New Pioneer World' in *Minnesota A History of The State*, (St. Paul, 1975), pp 186, 195, 197-198,

<sup>924</sup> O'Brien, Thomas D., Archbishop Ireland, in *Acta Et Dicta*, (October 1933), p.13

<sup>925</sup> Emmons, David M., *Beyond The American Pale The Irish In The West 1845-1910*, introduction. Leavenworth Wilder Morris, Lucy, *Old Rail Fence Corners Frontier Tales Told By Minnesota Pioneers*, (MHS, St. Paul, 1976), p.240

The 1860s were not only noted for their hardships; a booming wheat market existed which was assisted by high war-time wheat prices which tied Minnesota's agriculture to world markets and a cash-crop system. A settler who could afford the cost of the oxen, the horse-drawn mowers, reapers, and cultivators required to break the land remained in Minnesota while those less fortunate sold their land and moved on.<sup>926</sup> The 1862 Homestead Act further encouraged settlement on the land as settlers could claim land without charge provided they remained on the land for five years. By the 1870s Minnesota as a state had evolved from a wilderness outback province to a recognised state which contained so many nationalities that Emmons's statement which applied to mid nineteenth century America was true of Minnesota: 'literally millions of non-Indian peoples were in America but not of it'.<sup>927</sup>

In efforts to promote assisted emigration the proponents of such schemes did not focus on the small number of families who failed but there was an acceptance that, regardless of the advantages provided, some families would fail. However, the rates of failure were not consistent or large enough for proponents of assisted emigration to halt their plans. In the spring of 1884, under the auspices of Baroness Burdett-Coutts, 19 families were sent from the East End of London to the Province of Assiniboia in the North-west Territory of Canada. The immigrants described as artisans were examined two and a half years later to see whether or not they had become successful colonists. In the report the group was divided into three classes; those who had succeeded; those who were attempting to succeed and those who failed. The reasons given for why certain individuals failed were 'insufficient outfit, climate and individual character'. The report further stated, 'in any scheme of colonisation, individual character must exert a marked influence in the future of the colony'. The families had begun colonisation life under the same conditions and in a short space of time, 'the progress which some have made is in remarkable contrast to the non-success of others'. In conclusion the report stated it was almost cruel to send out the idle, worthless and feeble as it was unprofitable to the country and to the organisation under whose auspices they were sent. The author of the report further stated that providing charity impeded all efforts for independence.<sup>928</sup>

In investigating the efforts of Nugent and Sweetman in 1890, the Select Committee on Emigration identified their efforts as colonisation schemes and not emigration schemes.

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<sup>926</sup>Rhoda R. Gilman, The History and Peopling of Minnesota: Its Culture in *Daedalus*, Vol.129, No.3, Minnesota: A Different Minnesota? (Summer, 2000), p.2

<sup>927</sup> Emmons, David M., *Beyond The American Pale The Irish In The West 1845-1910*, Introduction.

<sup>928</sup> *Report of the Present Condition of the East London Colonists*, 1886 from the Sweetman Family Papers, at the National Library of Ireland, Collection List No. 156, MS 47, 599/12

Nugent and Sweetman's efforts were described as failed attempts at colonisation but 'very beneficial' as emigration schemes. The same emigrants who failed as colonists were successful as emigrants in that they gained employment and after some time, some of them succeeded in obtaining land for themselves. The committee produced a letter written by Father Nugent on 10 December 1889 from St. Paul in which he stated, 'I cannot well describe the comfortable and independent position of a number of people whom I sent from home in 1880'. In supporting assisted immigration, committee member, Mr William Rathbone felt that those who left did indeed make very good colonists but had to first go through an apprenticeship as emigrants and as labourers before they were fit to be colonists.<sup>929</sup>

James Nugent's efforts to assuage poverty in the west of Ireland by means of assisted emigration can only be seen as a success simply by the virtue that none of the families returned thereby alleviating pressure on the land. However, the greatest success for Nugent must surely rest with the achievements of the Tuke Committee. Sadly, James Nugent is hardly remembered in the context of assisting the poorest to leave the far west of Connemara and south Mayo. To simply recall Nugent's scheme as an example of failure would seem unfair as every scheme contained families who were unable to deal with the harsh realities of prairie life. These same people had difficulties dealing with the harsh realities of the life they left behind. James Nugent and those who supported him continued to work to alleviate Catholic Irish poverty and although Nugent's kindness towards the poorest is acknowledged perhaps at some stage in the future his efforts to alleviate poverty by way of assisted emigration may be further recognised.

### **The case of Nugent's Immigrants as a Transnational History**

Recording an integrated history, one that gives equal weighting to the Irish of Connemara and South Mayo and that of the 'diaspora' or migrant community of Minnesota and indeed the United States, will always present challenges. From the early 1990s, according to Delaney, there have been attempts to 'internationalise' American history, to look beyond the nation state, to place the experience of the U.S. in a global context while at

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<sup>929</sup> *Report from the Select Committee on colonisation; together with the proceedings of the committee, minutes of evidence, and appendix*, HC 1890 (354), pp 207-8, 212 qq 3462-8, 3471, 3542



the same time, undermining ‘notions of exceptionalism’.<sup>930</sup> The history of impoverished immigrants arriving to newly available agricultural land in North America during the latter decades of the nineteenth century is a shared history of many European nations. The history of emigration from the far west of Ireland is unusual in that the vast majority of Catholic emigration from Ireland took place in the decades following the famine and the subsequent clearances of estates.

A ‘transnational’ impulse has become more prominent in history writing across the globe, with scholars seeking to transcend national and local frameworks when investigating the past. However, transnational approaches are, relatively speaking, uncommon in Irish historical research. Nugent’s immigrants are one of the few groups of impoverished immigrants who can be traced from their original locations in the far west of Ireland to where they immigrated to. In some cases, the immigrants and their descendants’ can be traced to the present day. The insights provided by this study into the lives of Nugent’s immigrants in the decades after they immigrated can be added to the vast knowledge that already exists of Irish populations across the globe. The traditions and society the emigrants left were examined as was the complex culturally diverse society they arrived in, with account taken of the ‘differences rather than descending into generalities or broad sweeping statements about the experience of the diasporic Irish or the Irish ‘people’.<sup>931</sup> The approach used challenged the broad concept of assisted immigration as being from the point of departure to the selected destination. Although groups of people immigrated together they were not one homogenous group, this study indicated there was a breadth of possible outcomes within the same ethnic group and social class. The transnational approach outlined the importance of transience among immigrants in the United States in the nineteenth century. It can be seen that the history in the margins, the yet to be discovered history could be questioned with the use of the oral histories, personal records and personal written accounts. By placing Nugent’s immigrants at the centre of the focus of this study and not the immigration process, a far greater understanding of the lives of poor Irish immigrants of the Mid-West was achieved. The history of the United States is one of transience as migrants did not immediately discover or relocate to the state or region which was to become their permanent home. For most, including Nugent’s immigrants, the difficulties they left did not end when they boarded a ship

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<sup>930</sup> Delaney, Enda. “Directions in *historiography* Our island story? Towards a transnational history of late modern Ireland”, in *Irish Historical Studies*, xxxvii, no. 148 (November 2011), p. 603

<sup>931</sup> Delaney, Enda. “Directions in *historiography* Our island story? Towards a transnational history of late modern Ireland”, in *Irish Historical Studies*, xxxvii, no. 148 (November 2011), p.620

to cross the ocean. The networks which were established by family members were important as they encouraged siblings and parents to relocate. John Gallagher and Annie Lavelle moved many times in the first 20 years of their married lives but still never left south Mayo. The immigrants of south Connemara may have never left the small coastal enclaves they had been raised in and many families resided for generations in the same areas. The lives of those from south Connemara and south Mayo changed dramatically upon arrival in the U.S.; the traditional close-knit communities they had been a part of for so long would never again exist. However, as has been seen by this study, they joined new communities where their neighbours were a diverse mix of European immigrants, native peoples and the descendants of both.

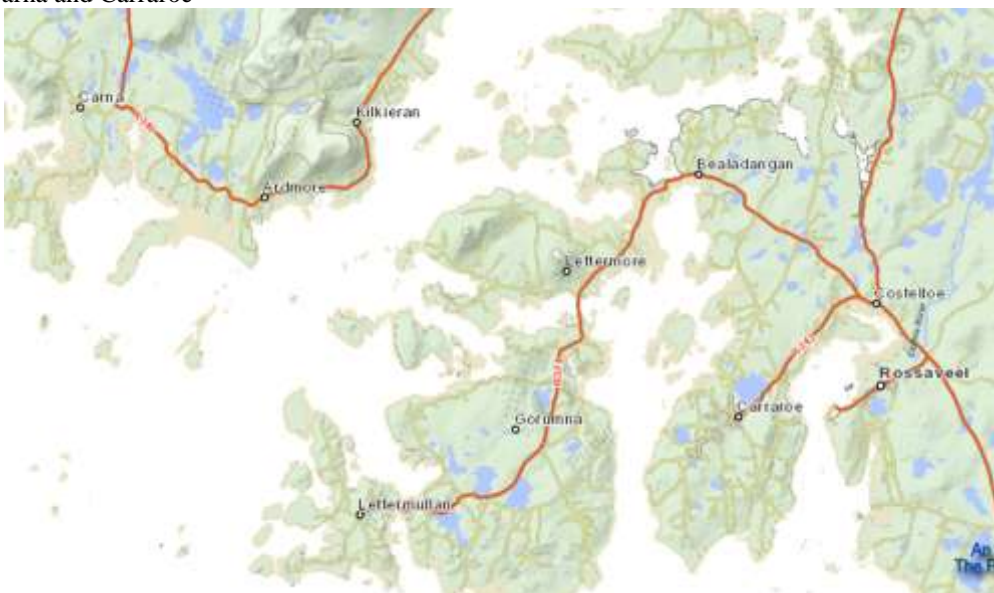
## Images

### Maps of Connemara and south Mayo

Map1: Connemara and South Mayo



Map 2: Carna and Carraroe



Map 3: Aughagower, South Mayo



*Ordnance Survey Ireland*

**Doolough, Leenaun, Connemara**



*Lawrence Photograph Collection, National Library Ireland*

## Connemara Peasants



*The Laurence Photograph Collection, NLI*

## Connemara Peasant Home-Spun Industry: Distributing the wool



*Valentine Photographic Collection, NLI*



An evicted family on the road to Connemara. The crisis of 1879-80



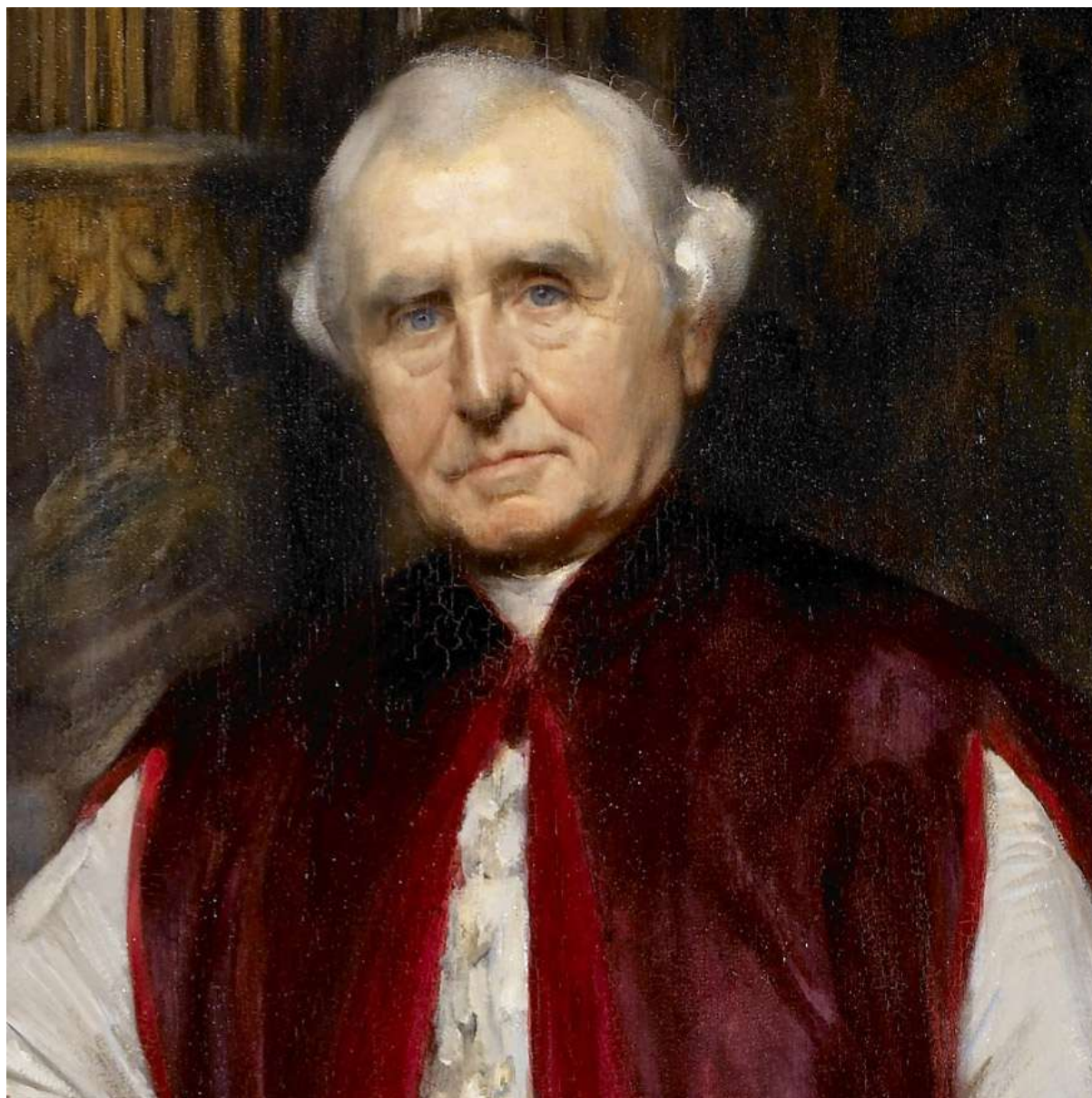
*Illustrated London News*, 20 March 1880

Tuke Emigrants Departing from Clifden



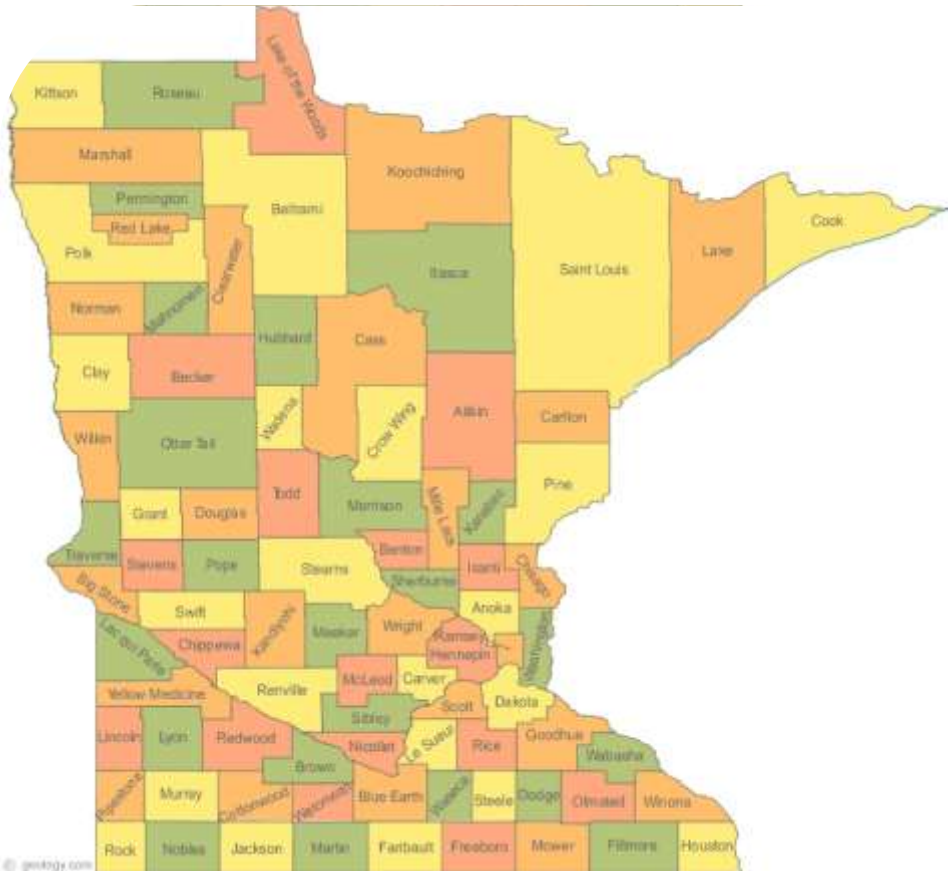
*Illustrated London News*, 21 July 1883

**James Nugent**



[www.nugentcare.org](http://www.nugentcare.org)

## Map of Minnesota Counties



geology.com

## Ojibwe Family



*Minnesota Historical Society*



## Minnesota homesteaders



*Minnesota Historical Society*



*Minnesota Historical Society*

## John Ireland



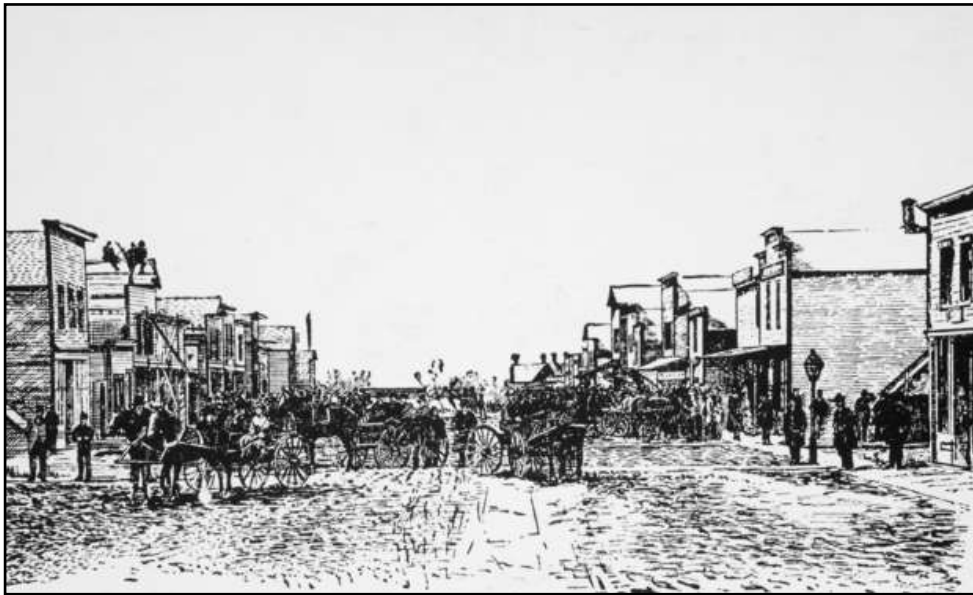
*Minnesota Historical Society*

## John Ireland and Catholic priests visiting Catholic colonies



*Minnesota Historical Society*

Graceville 1887



*Minnesota Historical Society*

Cold winter of 1880



*Minnesota Historical Society*

## Appendix

### Chapter 1

(Reference 137, page 36)

J.E. Stephens to the Mansion House Committee 23 February 1880.

Gentlemen,

I herewith send you receipt of your last grant of £25 to our committee. You will also find herewith enclosed a detailed account of the disbursement of the grant. The demands upon us for relief this week have been so many and so urgent that we have been obliged again to overdraw our account. Little as was the reduction in our grant from £30 to £25 we have felt it this week and have been obliged to strike off from our lists scores of families to whom we were unable to give relief. We trust Gentlemen, you will continue to make our grant at least £30 per week. We assure you in all truth and honour that many of our poor would now be starving had it not been for the relief from the Mansion House for the Duchess of Marlborough's weekly grant of £19.8.0 would be entirely inadequate to meet the want. Instead of passing notes of thanks at our meetings to the Gentlemen of your committee we ask our poor people to offer daily their best prayers to God for their spiritual and temporal interests of their benefactors and oh with what fervour they beseech Almighty God to bless and reward you. We have every hope that at your next meeting you will be so good as to note us a fresh grant to enable us to continue to cope with the growing distress of this vast district.

And now to pen a few words in reply to your favour of the 20<sup>th</sup> instant about the Ashlea Committee. As your grant to the committee was intended to be final it served no good purpose to continue the discussion. Since I wrote to you on this subject on the 19<sup>th</sup> inst. I have made it my business to go to Ashlea and I have ascertained facts and data that would prove most conclusively that far from exaggerating things I understate the case. I believe I can show that your grant of £25 would be far more than £5 to each non-catholic family in the district that could be supposed to be in distress. I hope the Rev. Mr. Clesham will, as you have directed, disburse your grant to his own congregation, but I have reason to fear that he may not do so. His people do not want relief, while he has at his door Catholic poor who certainly would be glad to be relieved on condition of sending their little ones to the jumper school. And I fear they may be relieved on

condition expressed or implied. That this is no mere groundless conjecture you will understand from the following fact. A few weeks ago Father Nugent and Mr. Smith of Liverpool were in the west of Ireland. On reaching Leenane they heard there was no relief committee there and Mr. Smith gave the hotel keeper, Mr. McKeon £20 as member of that committee. But it happens that Mr. McKeon was member both of the Leenane and of the Ashlea Committee and he gave the £20 to his friend Mr. Clesham. None of these £20 not one penny nor penny's worth was ever given to any Catholic in this parish (in which the Clesham committee has its being) save to one man who alone sends his children to Mr. Chesham's jumper school. This me thinks is a significant fact, a strange coincidence that may serve to show how the wind blows.

Without occupying your time in saying what I think of the explanation you give of the formation of the Ashlea committee. I must say I have no wish whatsoever to join the ranks of the calumniations of the Mansion House Committee. I am quite sure they would eagerly avail themselves of the service of any auxiliary and would promptly wire to the ends of the earth the sinister construction which they would not fail to put upon the mistake of which I complain. I should be very sorry indeed to be in any way the cause of supporting the flow of subscriptions to your committee and thereby deprive countless poor of much needed assistance, but no earthly consideration could induce me to hold my peace were I to see funds contributed for the relief of God's poor squandered directly or indirectly on proselytising our people. While I say all this I am not unmindful of the fact that the funds which you are distributing come from several sources, but I take the liberty of saying that in the allocation of your funds you have not to consider whence they have come, but for what purpose that have been contributed. The sources are many the motives but one, charity pure and simple in the relief of God's poor.

I have the honour to be Gentlemen,

Your faithful servant, J. E. Stephens C.C. Hon. Sec.<sup>932</sup>

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<sup>932</sup> J.E. Stephens to the Mansion House Relief Fund 23 February 1880, (Dublin City Library Archives, Mansion House Relief Fund, 67, Aughagower)

(Reference 138, page 37)

The emigrants who travelled to Minnesota had among them ten families from Carna. In March 1880 Father Grealy made every effort to seek aid for the people of Carna.

March 11 1880,

To the Mansion House Relief Committee. We beg most earnestly your kind attention to two points which we shall state briefly.

1<sup>st</sup> We have not received one shilling from any of the Dublin Committees for the last fortnight although the people here are perhaps the most destitute in Ireland and we are now very much in debt for meal. Unless we get substantial aid at once we very much fear lives will be lost as the people have not the seed itself now to fall back upon.

2<sup>nd</sup> There are almost 200 households in our district who have no seed to sow and are not rated occupiers – Consequently they will not benefit by the seed act 1880. These poor people are cottiers who lived principally by the sea, making kelp, fishing, and exporting turf and seaweed to Galway city and other markets for sale. They were thus employed by neighbours in better circumstances who allowed them half the price of the cargo in lieu of their labour. May we therefore respectfully urge the necessity of giving these poor people seed if within your power. If the seed be not forthcoming before a fortnight it will be too late in this locality.

Mazell – Chairman

A. Kearney M.D. Secretary

Patrick Grealy C.A. Treasurer.<sup>933</sup>

March 16 1880,

Gentlemen,

On behalf of our committee and the poor people of this parish we beg to tender you the most sincere thanks for cheque of £50 not to hand. We must not conceal from you and the public our full conviction that if we had not got aid today we would have deaths from hunger before Sunday next. The distress is so intense now and will continue so at least up to May that not less than £100 weekly will be

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<sup>933</sup> Mazell, Kearney and Grealy to Mansion House Relief Fund, dated 11 March 1880 (DCA, The Mansion House relief fund, ch 1/158/ 325, Carna).

of any use to us. We are in debt to the amount of £150 already. We must dissolve our committee if not better assisted. The amount of aid we were hitherto enabled to give only distracted and fatigued the poor people who had to travel some of them ten miles over a rugged mountain to get a few stones of Indian meal. We can not endure much longer the crowds of clamouring men, women and children who daily besiege our houses and the pain it causes us to have to let them home hungry, in fact, in danger of perishing on the roads or hillsides. We respectfully assure you gentlemen there is no other course open to us that this – to leave the people to the mercy of God. Let the Government or who will step in and save them. We have hitherto done our utmost for them but now see that in all probability all our efforts will prove fruitless. Fever too is doing its sad work here. With cordial thanks we remain respectfully,

P. Grealy, C.A. Treasurer, A. Kearney, Secretary.<sup>934</sup>

March 20 1880,

Gentlemen,

As you will observe by the returns I herewith enclose – we owe £83.2.0 in debt for Indian meal alone and this sum we must pay as soon as possible – We have given been no relief from your fund except Indian meal although the people of this district are very naked. By making us only a small grant just now we will not be able to give food for another week or perhaps longer and most certainly many of the people will starve in the meantime. I beg to assure you as a priest I do not exaggerate the sad state of things. I was engaged yesterday in the vain effort of distributing a grant of seed potatoes made to me for poor cottiers – I was obliged to suspend operations by the attitude of hostility by the large multitude of men, women and children presented crying out that it was food they wanted now and not seed. That seed was useless to people who were fainting from hunger and unable to work. With much difficulty I succeeded in getting the potatoes into store but not without having them considerably diminished by a crowd of hungry protestors who roasted the booty in a large fire built upon the Quay and ate most speedily. Many are indeed suffering and will I fear faint and die over their work in a short time. Three men to whom I gave a quantity of potatoes lost no time in procuring a pot and boiling a meal of them in order to be able to go home. They

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<sup>934</sup> P. Grealy and A. Kearney to Mansion House Relief Fund, dated 16 March 1880 (DCA, The Mansion House Relief Fund, ch 1/158/ 325, Carna).

swore to me solemnly that they could never sow a potato of them as their children had not a morsel to eat at home saying in the same tone that they should save themselves from death by robbery of anything that comes within their reach – The persons alluded to live in the most remote place in Ireland Loughconise by name and although not an island is scarcely approachable except by sea and then the tide is to be consulted. This village with a population of 60 families are more isolated than ever the islands along this coast and are far poorer. They are situated at the north end of Kilkerrin bay. It would be a noble and charitable act to supply them meal by the steamer. I have no doubt the humane and self sacrificing Lord Osborne would most willingly do so if instructed by you. I know the counties Galway and Mayo well and see localities getting large grants that do not require much aid – I also read of Islands with only small populations getting large amounts of money at the same time that they are having the lion's share of the meal. Some of those islands have got more aid although not so poor as this parish and not having a third the population. The population of this parish is 1,000 families or 5,000 souls and all have got and require relief except 50 families. This parish has the largest population in Connemara except the parish of Clifden and the most destitute too, and yet it has not got half the amount of relief as even the smallest and best off. This is easily accounted for – every other parish has people of influence to raise a sympathetic voice in its behalf. Every other parish has committees within committees, circle within circle working for it. Every other parish is visited by strangers of every creed, class and nationality. But not one here but the priest and so much out of the way and so little attraction that not a stranger or person of wealth ever sets a foot in it.

Gentlemen if you are not satisfied with my statements I dare say Lord Osborne would make a report of this district for you. I respectfully and earnestly urge the necessity of making us such a grant as will enable us to pay the debt and at the same time save the poor people. I have the honour to be gentlemen your obedient servant.

Patrick Grealy, C.A.<sup>935</sup>

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<sup>935</sup> Patrick Grealy to Mansion House Relief Fund, dated 20 March 1880 (DCA, The Mansion House Relief Fund, Ch 1/158/ 325, Carna).



## Chapter 4

(Reference 579, page 153)

Taken from Bridget Connelly's *Forgetting Ireland*, p. 57

Maggie recalled a story her mother used to tell and laugh over time and again: “it seems Bishop Ireland was coming to Graceville for Confirmation or something. So being that Ma’s father was the local barman, he wanted to send over two bottles and a box of cigars to Father Kennedy to have on hand when his house guest arrived to stay. So he gave them to Ma to run over to the priest’s house. When she got there, this old guy dressed in his shirtsleeves was sitting out front on the porch. She said to him, ‘My father sent this for father Kennedy’. The old man said, ‘Oh, indeed. I’ll take it. You don’t have to bother him’. Then, as she had been instructed by her father to tell father Kennedy, she said, ‘These are for the members of your Sacred Thirst Society’. ‘Oh indeed!’ responded the man in shirtsleeves. When Ma returned to the saloon, she reported to her father that she had delivered his message to some older guy out on the porch.” The “old guy” who intercepted the banter was, of course, none other than the famous Bishop Ireland, the guiding light of the Catholic temperance movement. Maggie added that, as she understands it, the message her mother delivered to the bishop was spoken in Gaelic.

(Reference 633, page 170)

The total population of Bigstone County in 1885 was 4558, of this number, 67 per cent of the population were born in the United States. Almost 50 per cent of the population were under 21 as such most of the adult population had immigrated to Minnesota. The German born population accounted for 3.9 per cent of the population; the Norwegian born population accounted for 7.8 per cent of the population while those born in Ireland accounted for 6.9 per cent of the population. The Irish population were primarily located in the town of Graceville and the townships of Toqua and Moonshine. Figure 1 indicates the origin of the population of Bigstone County as compiled by the Minnesota state census 1885.

Fig 1: 1885 Census Information; Bigstone County Minnesota<sup>936</sup>

TOWN	GE	NO	D	SW	CA	NAT	OT	IR	< 21	Total
AKRON	9	5	0	1	6	208	6	2	107	237
ALMOND	4	64	13	24	1	152	5	11	136	274
ARTICHOKE	0	107	5	1	0	118	1	3	134	235
BIGSTONE	7	4	6	45	0	174	0	2	99	238
BROWN'S VALLEY	16	22	1	6	25	372	14	24	255	480
GRACEVILLE	7	3	1	2	43	342	55	135	314	588
MALTA	2	3	1	10	6	180	2	0	103	204
MOONSHINE	8	0	0	8	13	84	4	52	92	169
ODESSA	74	21	0	22	3	158	12	2	159	292
ORTONVILLE	26	20	1	51	14	539	16	17	303	684
OTREY	0	38	15	14	7	104	2	3	86	183
PRIOR	19	70	5	115	29	404	9	7	329	658
TOQUA	7	0	0	0	24	223	5	57	69	316
TOTALS	179	357	48	299	171	3084	131	315	2170	4558

GE: German, NO: Norwegian, D: Danish, SW: Sweden, CA: Canada, NAT: Native born, OTH: England, Scotland, Switzerland, Wales, Australia, Portugal and Russia. IR: Ireland.

(Reference 637, page 170)

The 1900 U.S. census was the first census to question people's ability to speak English. Tables 1 and 2 indicated all of Nugent's immigrants spoke English.

Table 1: 1900 Census Bigstone, Minnesota.

Name	Place of Birth	Father POB	Mother POB	Age	Education	Language
John Gallagher	Ireland	Ireland	Ireland	69	Read & Write	English
Ann Gallagher	Ireland	Ireland	Ireland	61	Read & Write	English
Austin Ruddy	Ireland	Ireland	Ireland	76	Read & Write	English
Lawrence Flaherty	Ireland	Ireland	Ireland	70	None	English

*Census of Minnesota*

<sup>936</sup> Minnesota Historical Society, Minnesota State Population Census: Schedules, 1865-1905, (1885), Roll 21,

Table 2: 1910 Census (Moonshine, Minnesota) John Gallagher died in 1909.

Name	Place of birth	Father POB	Mother POB	Age	Education	Language
Ann Gallagher	IreEnglish	IreEnglish	IreEnglish	71	Read & Write	English
Lawrence	IreIrish	IreIrish	IreIrish	80	None	English
Flaherty	IreIrish	IreIrish	IreIrish	70	None	English
Maria Flaherty	IreIrish	IreIrish	IreIrish	61	Read & Write	English
Margaret Coyne	IreIrish	IreIrish	IreIrish	84	Read & Write	English
Austin Ruddy	IreIrish	IreIrish	IreIrish	68	None	English
Mary Ruddy						

*Census of Minnesota*

(Reference 640, page 171)

Table 3: Gallagher name as recorded by Griffiths Valuation of parishes incorporating Doo Lough 1856-57 <sup>937</sup>

Parish	Place Name	Identifiable Location	No. Of Families
Aghagower	0	n/a	0
Kilgeever	Carrownisky	N. Mayo	3
	Ballytoohy More	Clare island	1
	Bunnamohaun	Louisburgh	1
	Capnagower	Clare Island	1
	Dooghmakeon	Louisburgh	2
	Formoyle	Louisburgh	2
Oughaval	Cuilmore	Newport/Westport	6
	Derrylea	Newport/Westport	3
	Westport	Westport	30

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Table 4: Lavelle name as recorded by Griffiths Valuation of parishes incorporating Doo Lough 1856-57

Parish	Place name	Identifiable Location	No. Of Families
Aghagower	Knappaghmanagh	Westport	1
Kilgeever	<i>Lettereeragh</i>	<i>Doo Lough/Fin</i>	1
	Clare Island	Lough	1
		Clare Island	
Oughaval	Cartoor	N. Mayo Swinford	3
	Mullagh	Louisburgh	2
	Tangincartoor	Ballina/Castlebar	1
	Streamstown	Westport	1
	Killeencoff	Ballina/Swinford	1
	Westport	Westport	1

*Griffiths Valuation*

<sup>937</sup>[http://griffiths.askaboutireland.ie/gv4/gv\\_family\\_search\\_results.php?familyname=gallagher&firstname=&countyname=MAYO&baronyname=MURRISK&unionname=WESTPORT&parishname=KILGEEVER&submit=Start+Searching](http://griffiths.askaboutireland.ie/gv4/gv_family_search_results.php?familyname=gallagher&firstname=&countyname=MAYO&baronyname=MURRISK&unionname=WESTPORT&parishname=KILGEEVER&submit=Start+Searching)

[http://griffiths.askaboutireland.ie/gv4/gv\\_family\\_search\\_results.php?familyname=gallagher&firstname=&countyname=MAYO&baronyname=MURRISK&unionname=WESTPORT&parishname=OUGHAVALL&submit=Start+Searching](http://griffiths.askaboutireland.ie/gv4/gv_family_search_results.php?familyname=gallagher&firstname=&countyname=MAYO&baronyname=MURRISK&unionname=WESTPORT&parishname=OUGHAVALL&submit=Start+Searching)

(Reference 643, page 172)

Table 6 indicated people in 1901 who were 70 years or older and resided in town lands and on small farms close to Letteeragh. Other areas of south Mayo are included; the possibility that Annie Lavelle married a man from the south Mayo locality has been considered and as such, a sample is taken from a broad section of the community.

Table 5: 1901 Census - Mayo, Ireland (District of Kilgeever)

Name	Location	Age	Gender	Education	Language	Occupation
P. Duffy	Letteeragh	93	M	Cannot read	Irish & English	Retired Shepherd
P. Scanlon	Formoyle	75	M	Cannot read	Irish & English	Agri labourer
B. Kelly	Formoyle	78	M	Cannot read	Irish & English	Farmer
T. Kitterich	Formoyle	84	M	Cannot read	Irish & English	Farmer
M. Lavelle	Ballytoohy Beg CI	77	M	Cannot read	Irish & English	Retired
A. Barrett	Ballytoohy Beg	90	F	Cannot read	Irish & English	Retired
A. Moran	Ballytoohy Beg	79	M	Cannot read	Irish & English	Labourer
C. Ruddy	Bunnamohaun CI	76	M	R & W	Irish & English	Farmer
J. Ruddy	Bunnamohaun	83	M	R & W	Irish & English	Farmer
B. Ruddy	Bunnamohaun	82	F	Read	Irish & English	Farmers wife
J. Joyce	Kinknock	79	M	Cannot read	Irish & English	Tenant farmerwife
A. Joyce	Kinknock	76	F	Cannot read	Irish & English	Widow
M. Redderick	Kinknock	76	F	Cannot read	Irish & English	Widower
P. Corrigan	Srahwee	80	M	Cannot read	Dumb	Widow
S. Kilcoyne	Srahwee	85	F	Cannot read	Irish & English	Farmer
E. Kitterick	Srahwee	82	M	Cannot read	Irish & English	Retired shepherd
J. Davitt	Srahrooskey	100	M	Cannot read	Irish & English	Farmer
J. Malley	Srahnacloy	75	M	Cannot read	Irish & English	Farmer
B. Hastings	Laghta Eighter	72	F	Cannot read	Irish & English	Widow
C. Hastings	Laghta Eighter	70	F	Cannot read	Irish & English	Farmer
P. Naughton	Knockeen	70	M	Cannot read	Irish & English	Farmer
T. Kilcoyne	Knockeen	80	M	Cannot read	Irish & English	Farmer
P. Moran	Creggannagappul	70	M	Cannot read	Irish & English	Retired
E. Moran	Creggannagappul	70	F	Cannot read	Irish & English	Knitter
H. Wallace	Creggannagappul	70	F	Read	Irish & English	Farmer
J. Coyne	Tawnyinlough	84	M	Cannot read	Irish & English	Retired farmer
M. Ruddy	Calllacoan	78	F	Cannot read	Irish & English	Widow

(Reference 648, page 173)

Table 6: 1901 Census data for language identification purposes for Carna – Letterard, Knockboy

Name	Age	Gender	Education	Language	Occupation
Folan	80	F	Cannot read or write	Irish & English	Retired
Gorham	75	F	Cannot read	Irish	Farmer
Burke	75	F	Cannot read	Irish	Retired
Greene	75	F	Cannot read	Irish	Retired
Lydon	70	M	Read & write	Irish & English	Farmer
McDonagh	77	M	Read & write	Irish & English	Farmer
Conneely	80	F	Cannot read	Irish	Retired
Thomas	80	F	Cannot read	Irish	Retired
McHale	80	M	Cannot read	Irish	Farmer
Earls	99	F	Cannot read	Irish	Retired
Conneely	75	M	Cannot read	Irish	Farmer
Gorham	76	F	Cannot read	Irish	Retired
Conneely	80	F	Cannot read	Irish	Farmer
Keaney	80	M	Cannot read	Irish	Cotier
Mongan	86	F	Cannot read	Irish	Retired

Table 7: 1901 Census data for language identification purposes for Carna – Kylesalia, Owengowla

Name	Age	Gender	Education	Language	Occupation
Curran	70	M	Cannot read	Irish & English	Stone Mason
King	75	M	Cannot read	Irish & English	Wool Spinner
Joyce	70	F	Cannot read	Irish	House keeper
Nee	100	M	Cannot read	Irish	Farmer
Cooke	75	F	Cannot read	Irish & English	Nurse
Lee	70	F	Cannot read	Irish	Retired
Conneely	76	M	Read & write	Irish & English	Farmer
Joyce	70	F	Cannot read	Irish	House keeper
Dundas	74	M	Cannot read	Irish & English	Farmer
Nee	90	M	Cannot read	Irish	Farmer
McGrath	80	F	Cannot read	Irish	Retired
Nee	75	M	Cannot read	Irish	Farmer

Table 8: 1901 Census data for language identification purposes for Carna – Kilkieran, Skannive

Name	Age	Gender	Education	Language	Occupation
Geary	80	F	Read & write	Irish & English	Retired
Conneely	70	M	Read & write	Irish & English	Farmer
King	72	M	Read & write	Irish & English	Farmer
Folan	90	M	Cannot read	Irish	Farmer
McAndrew	80	F	Cannot read	Irish & English	Retired
Joyce	97	M	Cannot read	Irish & English	Farmer
Conneely	80	F	Cannot read	Irish	Retired
King	70	M	Read & write	Irish & English	Farmer
Connolly	80	M	Cannot read or write	Irish	Farmer
Connolly	78	F	Cannot read	Irish	Retired
O'Donnell	80	M	Cannot read	Irish & English	Farmer
Flaherty	80	F	Cannot read	Irish	Wool spinner
Folan	70	F	Cannot read	Irish	House keeper
Powell	70	F	Cannot read	Irish & English	House keeper
Coyne	70	M	Cannot read	Irish & English	Agricultural Lab.
Conneely	70	M	Cannot read	Irish	Agricultural Lab.
Ridge	72	M	Cannot read	Irish & English	Farmer
Walsh	75	F	Cannot read	Irish	Retired
Walsh	82	M	Cannot read	Irish	Farmer
Curran	83	F	Cannot read	Irish	Retired
Curran	80	F	Cannot read	Irish	Retired
Walsh	80	M	Cannot read	Irish & English	Farmer
Cooke	75	F	Cannot read	Irish	House keeper
Mulkerrin	80	F	Cannot read	Irish	Knitter
Powell	75	F	Cannot read	Irish	House keeper

Table 9: 1901 Census data for language identification purposes for Carna – Lehanagh S., Moyrus

Name	Age	Gender	Education	Language	Occupation
Nee	74	M	Read & write	Irish & English	Farmer
Ridge	75	M	Cannot read	Irish	Farmer
Flaherty	92	F	Read & write	Irish & English	Retired
McDonough	70	M	Cannot read	Irish & English	Farmer

Table 10: 1901 Census data for language identification purposes for Carna – Shana Keela, Illion

Name	Age	Gender	Education	Language	Occupation
Joyce	70	F	Cannot read	Irish & English	Farmer

## Chapter 5

(Reference 776, page 211)

Figure 2 indicated where the immigrants departed from and the ports the emigrants arrived at in 1883 when the greatest number of emigrants left Ireland under Tuke's schemes.

Fig 2: J.H. Tuke Report - List of Sailing 1883<sup>938</sup>

Date	Ship	From	To	# emigrants
March 23	Phoenician	Galway	Boston	214
March 30/31	Nestorian	B/Bay and Galway*	Boston	538
April 1	Indiana	Queenstown	Philadelphia	65
April 11	Adriatic	Queenstown	New York	68
April 13 and 14	Canadian	B/Bay and Galway*	Boston	521
April 19	British prince	Queenstown	Philadelphia	134
April 21	Austrian	Galway	Boston	128
April 21 and 22	Scandinavian	B/Bay and Galway*	Quebec	409
April 27 and 28	Phoenician	B/Bay and Galway*	Boston	430
April 28	Buenos Ayrean	Galway	Quebec	276
May 4 and 5	Manitoban	B/Bay and Galway*	Quebec	365
May 11 and 12	Prussian	B/Bay and Galway*	Boston	500
May 20 and 21	Canadian	B/Bay and Galway*	Quebec	374
May 25 and 26	Austrian	B/Bay and Galway*	Boston	356
May 25	Britannic	Queenstown	New York	15
June 2	Phoenician	Galway	Boston	60
June 2 and 3	Grecian	B/Bay and Galway*	Quebec	262
June 9	Scandinavian	Galway	Boston	40
June 9	Buenos Ayrean	Blacksod Bay	Quebec	83
June 16	Prussian	Galway	Boston	49
June 16	Manitoban	Galway	Quebec	73
June 22 and 23	Waldensian	B/Bay and Galway*	Boston	230
June 23	Lake Winnipeg	Galway	Quebec	57
			Australia and other districts	79
Total				5327

\*Blacksod Bay and Galway

<sup>938</sup> Emigration from Ireland: Second Report of the committee for Mr Tuke's Fund (London, 1883), 'Reports and Papers Relating to the Proceedings of Mr Tuke's Fund for Assisting Emigration from Ireland, during the years 1882, 1883 and 1884', p.6

Figure 3 indicated the many destinations the emigrants subsequently moved to upon arriving in the U.S.

Fig 3: Destinations of US bound Emigrants 1883<sup>939</sup>

<b>American State</b>	<b>Location</b>
Vermont	Colchester, Enosburgh Falls, Essex Junction, St. Albans, South Barnard, Woodstock.
Maine	Portland
New Hapshire	Manchester
Rhode Island	Pawtucket, Providence, Warren.
Connecticut	Birmingham, Central Village, North Grosvenordale, Windsorville.
Massachusetts	Boston, Cambridge, Port, Chelsea, Clinton Lynn, Millbury, Pitsfield, Worcester.
New York	Brooklyn, Chittenanga, Fort Hamilton, Johnstown, Kingston, Ulster Co., New York City, Syracuse, Troy.
New Jersey	Gloucester City, Trenton, Woodbury.
Pennsylvania	Alleghany, Chester, Connelsville, Frankstown, Hopewell, Johnston, Mansfield, Minooka, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Scranton, Walkerspoint, Whiteash, Wilkesbarre.
Maryland	Baltimore
Ohio	Cincinnati, Lawrence Co. Newburgh, Stenbensville, Titusville, Webster Co.
Kentucky	Louisville, Newport
Virginia	Brook Co. Kingsville, Norfolk, Randolph, Wheeling.
Indiana	Richmond
Delaware	Wilmington
Tennessee	Nashville
Wisconsin	Broadford, Elroy, Stalwart, Whitewater.
Illinois	Rock Island, Chicago
Iowa	Independence
Minnesota	Graceville, Minneapolis, Osakis, St. Josephs, St. Paul.

<sup>939</sup> Emigration from Ireland: Second Report No. 2 of the Committee for Mr. Tukes Fund, 'Reports and Papers Relating to the Proceedings of Mr Tuke's Fund for Assisting Emigration from Ireland, during the years 1882, 1883 and 1884', p.16



(Reference 779, page 212)

From D\_\_\_ C\_\_\_, Maidstone Cross, Canada, 5 July 1883.<sup>940</sup>

This is a very good country to live in, there is any amount of work for labouring men and for girls also; we are both working steady on one job since we started at one dollar and ½ per day.... Richard Lunn is getting along well, he says he will go to the States next month, and I am sure he will be sorry for it if he goes, he says he can get work for his boys there what he cannot get her for them.

From H\_\_\_ M\_\_\_, Stratford Ontario, 23 July 1883

I am in good health and working every day, myself and Pat, I am very glad that I came here. This is a good place for anyone, one that will keep from drink. It is very chape here and I could get a quart of whiskey for a shilling, bit I did not take a second glas since I came here or I won't.

From A\_\_\_ T\_\_\_, Peterborough, Ontario, & May 1883

I was only twenty minutes at the hotel before I was engaged on a farm. Wages are big here; this is a fine country. Spring is just commencing. My parents have got a house here, and father is working on the railway.

From Mrs. T\_\_\_ Ontario, Canada, 29 July 1883.

I will write to you again in 10 days time when T\_\_\_ is paid and send you something but it cannot be much this time – but after that again I will send you something that will release your clothes. How happy I will be when you come out here and my dear sister. I am sure they will do well for Harry can work every day with T\_\_\_ and get 6s. per day....T\_\_\_ is more anxious again than I am to send you some money, and he is greatly improved he takes no drink to signify. He feels so delighted at you and Harry coming and we will have a nice place before you please God.

From \_\_\_\_\_, Lindsay, Ontario, 16 July 1883

This is a good country among good nabors....Thank God we left poverty and I wish ye did the same.... Don't bleve storys as they say at home. Every one can go where the like. There is no stopige.

From a Government Official (Canada) 23 June 1883

Irish immigrants who have come to this country, and who have been able and willing to work, have been immediately placed; and I am happy to tell you that I think the great bulk of them are doing well.

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<sup>940</sup> Mr Tuke's Fund, Letters from Canada and the United States (1883), 'Reports and Papers Relating to the Proceedings of Mr Tuke's Fund for Assisting Emigration from Ireland, during the years 1882, 1883 and 1884, pp 5-13

From K\_\_\_ M\_\_\_, Ashley, Lucerne Co., Penn, 22 July 1883,

I mean to inform ye that this is the best country in the world, and let no one dispraise this country.

From T\_\_\_ M\_\_\_, (of Feenish Island), Portland, Maine, 15 July 1883.

I 'aint sorry for leaving Ireland, and if I got Feenish Island free for ever I would not go. There ain't a month but we would have £20 a month.

From M\_\_\_ B\_\_\_, South Minneapolis, Minnesota, 23 June 1883

This is a good country there is plenty work and good wages I mean to let you know that this is a splendid country for any person to come to I mean to let you know that I started to work the following day after me arriving here... dear friend I mean to let you know that I can sit at a table as good as the best man in Belmullet thank God that I left that miserable place. I mean to let you know that I had good friends here before us and brought us write away to the house whear they have everything fitting for us and for better than us.

From M\_\_\_ B\_\_\_, St. Paul, Minnesota, 20 June 1883

This is a good country for all kind of men; lots of working go on in St. Paul. Dear sir, I am getting £8 a month; John is gettin' a pound a week; Uncle is getting £7 month to; and is son is getting £1 week.

From \_\_\_, Portland Mass; 28 July 1883

I am sending my mother £3 for the tea... I am glad I came here I am not sorry. I got steady work since the day after I landed. This is a good place for women. I am working in the paper mill.

(Reference 793, page 216)

In 1889 Tuke published a number of letters highlighting the success of the immigrants who lived in or around St. Paul, Minnesota.

A.O'D., with his three or four sons and one daughter, lives in the same block as T.F., in the north-western side of St. Paul. They have been doing very well. The girl helps the mother to keep house, and the boys and father work out. For about four months of the year they had been getting each two dollars a day, and the day, it should be understood, is from 7am to 6pm, with an hour off for dinner. In the shorter days of winter, work ceases at 5 or 4.30, and the pay drops to one dollar fifty cents or one dollar twenty-five cents. The O'D's had bought two lots,

costing one 600 and the other 500 dollars, and had built and furnished a good storey-and-a-half house, twenty-four feet by sixteen feet, besides the kitchen. The young people's rather surprising backwardness in English at the start has been disappearing before the influence of the night-schools and other means of education. They are remarkably temperate and even 'teetotal'. And this is everything.<sup>941</sup>

T.O'T., wife, and six children, the younger ones going to school, the eldest son and the father making together from eighteen to twenty dollars a week throughout the year, and saving a good deal of money.<sup>942</sup>

P.T.H. is a 'section boss' on railroad, with forty-five dollars a month and house free. He has bought a lot, and has quiet a deal of money.<sup>943</sup>

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<sup>941</sup> Tuke James, H., 'News From Some Irish Emigrants', *The Nineteenth Century*, vol., xxv, (London, 1889), p. 435

<sup>942</sup> Ibid.

<sup>943</sup> Ibid.

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